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A LETTER ON THE
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A

LETTER

TO

A PROTESTANT FRIEND,

ON THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES:

BEING A CONTINUATION OF THE

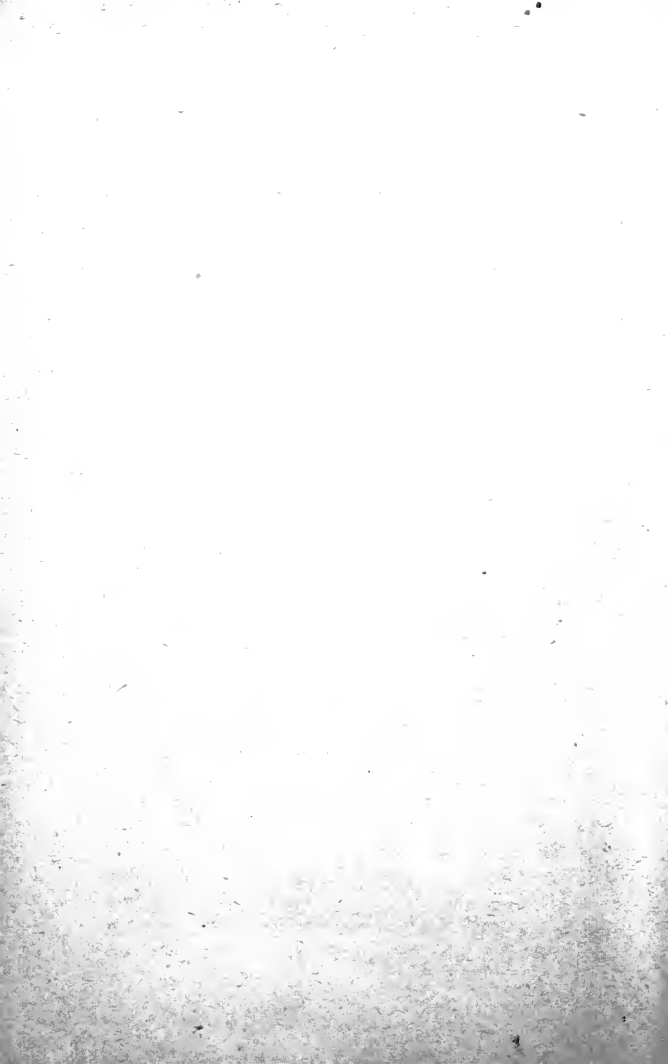
"DEFENCE OF CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES."

The foolishness of God is wiser than men: and the weakness
of God is stronger than men."--1 Cor. i. 25.

BY DEMETRIUS A. GALLITZIN.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following "LETTER TO A PROTESTANT FRIEND," I give to the public at the request of some respectable friends, who are of opinion that it may be of benefit to other Protestants besides the one to whom it is directed. In my "ADDRESS TO THE PROTESTANT PUBLIC," I have stated my reasons for not addressing the Protestant minister any more. His ungentlemanly language, together with the many falsehoods he advances in order to expose the Catholic cause to the hatred and contempt of the public, plainly shew that he is not actuated by motives of charity, and that he is blinded by passion; and of course, not open to conviction. However, truth compels me to acknowledge, that I am, nevertheless, indebted to him for affording me a considerable degree of assistance in converting Protestants to the Catholic faith. His "VINDICATION OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE REFORMATION," gave the finishing stroke to several of them, who after reading Catholic principles in Catholic books, were very curious to know what arguments Protestant writers could have to oppose to those principles. They read the

“Vindication” with the greatest attention, and read it again: what was the result? They came to me, and prayed to be admitted members of the Catholic church, On the first Sunday of October (after having made their sacramental confession) six of them made their public profession of Catholic faith, before the altar at St. Michael’s church of Loretto, according to the rites and ceremonies prescribed by the Roman ritual, renouncing their errors, and promising before God and the congregation, to live and die in the Roman Catholic church. Since that time several more Protestants have applied to me, and testified an eager desire to become members of the holy Catholic church of Christ. If I had any favor to ask of the Protestant minister, it would be that he would please continue to write against the Catholic church, and to vindicate the doctrines of the reformation. I promise to make a good use of his writings, and to draw from them a great deal of useful information, for the conversion of all sorts of Protestants to the Catholic faith.

There are some precious acknowledgments made by the Protestant minister in his “Vindication of the Doctrines of the Reformation,” which should be very sufficient to open the eyes of Protestants to the imminent danger they are exposed to, whilst living in a state of separation from the holy Catholic church of Christ. I shall only notice two of those acknowledgments.

1st, (page 13.) He tells us plainly that no such a thing as INFALLIBILITY was ever intended by Jesus Christ to be given to the church; in other words, it was never intended by Jesus Christ, that we should know to a certainty, whether we believe right or

wrong; for the mysteries of revelation are so transcendently above the reach of the human understanding, that none but a divine infallible guide can possibly prevent our going astray in investigating those profound mysteries, or give us a certainty that we do not misunderstand the words or mistake the sense of our blessed Saviour.

Protestants! here is a plain acknowledgment made by one of your ministers, and I dare say, confirmed by the whole of them, that the church or churches you and they belong to, are not infallible. Pause a little, if you value your souls, and meditate seriously on the consequences of that acknowledgment. It appears, then, that your believing right or wrong is left to chance; that your ministers can give you no security that they deliver unto you the true interpretation of the word of God, or the sense of the Holy Ghost; and that you shall never know to a certainty whether you believe right or wrong until you find yourselves before the judgment of him who has declared that "he who believes not shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 16.

2d, (page 117.) Speaking of the divisions in the Protestant communions, he acknowledges that there is "A CRIMINAL SCHISM SOMEWHERE" among them.

Protestants! read the words of St. Paul, Ephes. v. 25, 26, 27, and you will find that the church is the spouse of Christ, as holy as Christ could make it, and far from having in its bosom a criminal schism SOMEWHERE, has not even the least blemish any where. From your minister's own acknowledgment, the Protestant church, then, is not the church of Christ

and from his own acknowledgment, he knows **THERE IS A CRIMINAL SCHISM SOMEWHERE**, but he is not able to tell where it is. Protestants if you wish to know where it is, read the "Defence of Catholic Principles," and read the following "Letter to a Protestant Friend," and you will find that the whole reformation is a criminal schism, or a separation from the only true Catholic church of Jesus Christ, which (although having many wicked members, both among clergymen and laymen,) yet was always **ITSELF** holy, immaculate, and infallible in its faith and moral doctrine.

The acknowledgments made by your Protestant minister, give the reformation a mortal stab. They give rise to very serious reflections; reflections that have opened the eyes of many, and have caused several Protestant ministers in New York and elsewhere, to forsake the pretended reformation, and to join the Catholic Church.

Protestants! as long as I live I shall consider it my duty to try to undeceive you; to remove the prejudices in which you have been raised; to counteract the schemes by which the ministers of the pretended reformation have ever tried to render the Catholic church odious and ridiculous. I shall never cease calling upon you in the name of your and my Saviour, to forsake the criminal schism in which you live, and to return to the pale of the Catholic church, from which your ancestors departed.

The Protestant minister accuses me, in his Preface, of **KINDLING UP A FLAME THAT HAD LONG SINCE BEEN EXTINGUISHED**, because I do not

choose to let him say what he pleases against the Catholic church. Is this fair? Is this candid? Without any provocation on our part, and at a time when the country was in danger, when the enemy was in the heart of the country, our capital threatened, &c. &c. at that very time (the general government having appointed a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer) it was expected that the ministers of religion would exhort their hearers to repentance, and call upon them in the name of God, to unite in defending their country, how does he fulfil that sacred duty? "Look," says he, "look through all the countries of your Popish and Heathen neighbors, and see if the former have changed their superstition, or the latter their gods, which yet are no gods," &c. &c., and again a little farther, "We are Americans, we are Protestants."

The above expressions are well calculated to disunite, to kindle up a flame, to raise scorn and contempt on one side, anger and ill will on the other side. I should think myself guilty of a gross neglect of duty, were I to suffer such expressions to pass unnoticed, or not to contradict the many falsehoods he advances in order to ridicule the Catholic doctrine. On the other hand I shall give him full liberty to advance whatever he pleases against my person. He tells us in his Preface, that he took no notice whatever of a piece which I published in the *Huntingdon Gazette*, in order to refute his expressions, "because," says he, "it was too despicable to merit a reply." If he had added that my person itself is very despicable, I should feel obliged to acknowledge the correctness of his expressions, and I hope, with the grace of God, that I shall never feel any

anger or resentment against his person were he even to say much worse of me. The truth is, I feel within my breast inclinations to every kind of evil, and if there is any evil which I do not commit, I must entirely attribute it to the grace of God. My talents also, are very slender and trifling. It is no wonder, then, if their productions should be despicable. Indeed, if I did not depend on the goodness of my cause, which is the cause of Jesus Christ, I should never have the presumption to step forward in its defence. However, the same God that enabled an ass to speak, that enabled the illiterate to convert the universe, that caused ignorance to overcome wisdom, and weakness to triumph over power, may also enable my ignorance to detect and expose the cunning and artful stratagems of falsehood against truth, and to say something to the purpose, in defence of the Catholic cause. In truth, it does not require a very great share of knowledge or very extraordinary talents to refute the many falsehoods advanced against the Catholic doctrine. When we hear it said by thousands of Protestants, that the Pope is Antichrist, although the scripture plainly tells us that Antichrist will only reign three years and half a year, viz. forty-two months; when we hear it said that Catholic priests have horns; that Christ was crucified by the Roman priests; that Protestants turning to the Catholic church, are made to curse their mothers' breasts; that the Popes sell out licenses to commit sins; that Catholics think it no sin to murder Protestant kings; that Catholics do not think it a duty to keep faith with Protestants; that they think it meritorious to massacre Protestants; that their holy water is made of

the priests' spittle, &c.; that money will bring any souls out of purgatory, &c. When we here these, and many more lies, asserted among Protestants of every denomination and of every nation, we are not at a loss to know where those lies originate. Thank God, there are some Protestant ministers, who are men of conscience, and who, from principle, never will say a word against the Catholic church when they preach or instruct; some of them indeed have lost their places by this their moderate disposition; for, such is the taste of many Protestants, that the most eloquent sermons appear to them insipid, unless they are set off with some invectives against Popery.

Protestants! it is a common saying, and a very true one, that "honey catches more flies than vinegar." If your minister really believes that we are going astray, along the broad road of perdition, why does he not address us in the sweet accents of charity? Why does he not exhort his hearers to pray for our conversion? Why does he not publish little tracts, written in the spirit of mildness and charity, and wherein he, in a gentle manner, proves the fallacy of our real principles, without attributing to us principles and doctrines which (he well knows) never belonged to us? We are made of the same flesh and blood as you; we are subject to the same infirmities; we are easily, too easily, provoked by insults and calumnies; and when provoked, feel very little inclined to listen even to the good instructions or advice of him that insults or provokes us.

It certainly is a gross violation of the maxims of religion to substitute noise for sense, insult for argument,

accusation for conviction; and it is also a departure from the rules of wisdom and prudence.

Insult is the instrument with which bad causes attack good ones. If it be in the power of reason to convince, why have recourse to abuse and invective? The celebrated Vossius says, that he one day observed to a Protestant minister at Dort in Holland, that it was wrong to impose upon the people, though it were even in regard of Popery. "What then!" said the minister, "do you mean to take part with the Papists? No; believe me, you cannot abuse them too much; it is our duty to make the people detest them." Vossius informs us also, that he heard the same observations from the ministers at Amsterdam; "if we leave off preaching that the Pope is Antichrist," said they, "the people will leave our communion."

Here is a candid acknowledgment.

The Catholic church must be abused forsooth, because it has truth on its side, and truth is hateful to error.

It must be misrepresented, because fairly represented it is divine; its beauty, its sublimity, its awful majesty prove its divine origin.

Protestants! it must be held out an object of your execration and contempt, in order to keep you from becoming members of that holy church of Christ. Let a man err as he pleases, let him reject all revelation, deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, or even the existence of a God; let him be notorious for his blasphemies or impieties, still there is charity for him—for the Roman Catholic there is none.

Most of Protestant ministers in all countries, unite

in bawling out against Popery, in calling the Pope Antichrist, the church a sink of idolatry and superstition; and take pains to leave such unfavorable impressions on the minds of their hearers with regard to the Catholic church, that they scorn the very idea of investigating its principles, and would be ashamed to be suspected of entertaining a favorable idea of it.

The question naturally occurs, if the Catholic faith is really so ridiculously contemptible, so foolishly absurd, why, in the name of good sense, keep so much fuss about it? If we despise an enemy, we pass him by in contemptuous silence, thinking him beneath our notice. Now it is notorious, that ever since the pretended reformation, Protestant ministers of all sorts, and in all Protestant countries, have continually kept up the most clamorous noise against it. It is not easy to conceive the extravagance of the sanctified violence with which the zeal of Protestant ministers was wont to assail us. The pulpits of the reformation re-echoed with abuse the most coarse, the most illiberal; oratorical eloquence was exhausted in proving the absurdity of our principles, by attributing to us principles that were not ours; and the presses of the reformation were groaning with lies, and overflowing the world with volumes of antidotes against Popery. In the name of sense, why so much fuss, these three hundred years past, about a thing that is said to be so very contemptible, far below the notice of any man of sense?

Protestants! by this manner of proceeding, your ministers have, in spite of themselves, offered their tribute of respect and veneration to the Catholic cause, and tacitly acknowledged the respectability, the majes-

ty, and the divinity of that institute which they affect to despise. The blaze of evidence shone so bright in favor of the Catholic doctrine, that clouds of dust had to be kicked up to blind your eyes. The voice of truth spoke so plain, through the mouth of the ministry of Christ in the Catholic church, that thundering vociferations had to be raised to deafen your ears. The proofs of its divinity were so convincing, that your attention had to be diverted from those proofs, by drawing the same on the seeming contradictions and absurdities which corrupted reason may readily find in mysteries which it is not able to understand.

In truth, it requires very little learning to be able to ridicule transubstantiation and other mysteries of the Christian religion. The puny reason of a bad reasoner is sufficient for the task; and where the defect or lameness of his argument might expose him to censure or to a discovery of the cheat, the defect may be supplied by a little exertion of his wit. A few sarcastic remarks, a few tales to excite a roar of laughter, such as the tale of the tub, from Dean Swift, (page 33 of the "Vindication,") will answer the purpose very well.

My Protestant brethren! the following "Letter to a Protestant Friend," I offer for your perusal. The main subject of it is, the Holy Scripture, which the Catholic church venerates, as the word of God, and from which we draw the doctrine of salvation. By reading that part of the letter, you will be surprised to find how ill grounded the charge is, which your minister makes against Catholic priests, of concealing scripture, &c.

In the latter part of the letter, you will find several

more points of Catholic doctrine explained, which are not mentioned in the "Defence of Catholic Principles," and also an answer to several objections of your minister. If I did not answer all his objections, or refute all his arguments or assertions, it was for the following reasons :

1. To answer them all minutely, would take more time than I have to spare.

2. Most of his assertions are destitute of proof, and therefore, do not require an answer.

3. Some of his arguments were either too sublime or too obscure for my weak understanding. I really could not comprehend them. I read page 27, on transubstantiation, over and over again; I paused; I meditated; I read again; I put my brains to the rack. All in vain. I found myself obliged to pass on, without understanding the minister's meaning. I then recollected the following words of Dryden, which put an end to my perplexity :

"The lit'ral sense is hard to flesh and blood,
But nonsense never can be understood."

4. Some of the minister's assertions are so evidently false, that it would be time lost to refute them. For instance, (page 115) where he asserts, that the number of those of the Romish church are now small, in comparison of those who have protested against its tyranny, &c. Again, pages 48, 49, where he (upon the authority of his very inaccurate theologian, Buck) attempts to deny that the Greeks believe in transubstantiation, the seven sacraments, confession, purgatory, &c. &c. Never did any differences exist between the

Latin and the Greek churches on those essential articles of faith.

5. Many of his arguments are only sarcasms, and therefore, no arguments at all.

6. Many more of his arguments consist in abuse, unbecoming epithets, &c., and those I should be very sorry to notice.

These are some of my reasons for passing over a great part of the Protestant minister's "Vindication," in perfect silence. Some particular points, nevertheless, that would require a refutation, may have escaped my notice. If I shall discover any such, I may probably make them the subject of some future publications; for I feel very anxious to conceal no part of the truth from you, that I may have nothing to answer for at the day of judgment, if you should be found out of the pale of Christ's church.

I know, my Protestant brethren, that it is very difficult to divest one's self of prejudice, especially of prejudice contracted in one's infancy. I therefore venture to give you an advice, which, at any rate, can do you no harm. I know that from the prejudices in which you have been raised, the very words **ROMAN CATHOLIC** convey to your mind ideas of absurdity, nonsense, bigotry, superstition, &c., therefore I advise you (before you begin to read this or any other Catholic book) to try to divest yourself of all your old prejudices, to forget that you ever heard a word against the Catholic church, to remember, that **TRUTH** always was, and always will be, hateful to this sinful world, that **Jesus Christ** was hated and persecuted because he was a preacher of the truth; that his church cannot

expect better treatment than himself, because his church is also a constant preacher of the truth, and according to Christ's promise, "will have the Spirit of Truth forever." (John xiv. 16, 17.) Well, then, before you begin to read, pray your heavenly father who is infinitely merciful and both able and willing to save you, that he may discard prejudice from your mind, that he may give you grace to read and to examine without partiality, that he may enlighten your weak understanding, give you faith to believe, and courage, (in spite of all difficulties) to embrace that faith which alone can convey you to everlasting happiness.



LETTER

TO

A PROTESTANT FRIEND

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN reading the "VINDICATION OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE REFORMATION," lately published by one of your ministers, you must have taken notice of one particular point of accusation, which he repeatedly urges against us, viz. that we (the Roman Catholic priests) have taken away the key of knowledge, by keeping the sacred scriptures from the eyes of the people. The more serious the accusation is, the more it is deserving of an impartial and dispassionate investigation; and to you in particular, my dear friend,—to you who are seriously engaged in search of the true religion, it is a matter of great importance to know, whether the above accusation be founded on truth or not; for, if you believe it true you will at once make up your

mind not to listen to me, or to any other of the impostors who withhold from the knowledge of mankind the sacred writings of their God and Saviour, published for the salvation of their souls.

I confess, I am much surprised at the accusation so repeatedly brought against the Catholic clergy; and by men who are not remote from correct sources of information.

I lived, during fifteen years, in a Catholic country, under a Catholic government, where both the spiritual and temporal power were united in the same person—the reigning prince of that country was our archbishop. In that country, you may be sure, the Catholic rules and principles were strictly observed; and in that very country I saw the Catholic bible, in the German language, in all the booksellers' shops, printed, and re-printed, and sold, without exception, to any person that wished to purchase. During a great part of that time I was not a member of the Catholic church; an intimacy which existed between our family and a certain celebrated French philosopher, had produced a contempt for revealed religion. Raised in prejudices against revelation, I felt every disposition to ridicule those very principles and practices which I have adopted since. I only mention that circumstance, in order to convince you that my observations at that time being those of

an enemy, and not of a bigoted member of the Catholic church, are, in the eyes of a Protestant, the more entitled to credit; and from the same motive, I shall also add, that during those unfortunate years of my infidelity, particular care was taken not to permit any clergyman to come near me. Thanks be to the God of infinite mercy, the clouds of infidelity were dispersed, and revelation adopted in our family. I soon felt convinced of the necessity of investigating the different religious systems, in order to find the true one. Although I was born a member of the Greek church, and although all my male relations, without any exception, were either Greeks or Protestant, yet did I resolve to embrace that religion only, which upon impartial inquiry, should appear to me to be the pure religion of Jesus Christ. My choice fell upon the Catholic church, and at the age of about seventeen I became a member of that church. I read the bible; and saw my neighbors, rich and poor, reading it, without any objection on the part of the clergy. I frequented numbers of Catholic churches, and in all of them heard numberless quotations from the bible, as from the written word of God. I was acquainted with hundreds of the Catholic clergy; and do assert, nay am willing to swear, if called upon by legal authority, that I never knew any Catholic bishop or parish priest to

withhold the scripture from the knowledge of the people committed to their care. I am intimately acquainted with numbers of German, French, Italian, English, Irish, and American priests, and never could hear from any of them, that the reading of the holy scriptures was prohibited in their respective countries. I have seen many Catholic bibles, printed in France, England, Ireland, Scotland, &c. In this country the English Catholic bible has been printed and re-printed in several cities of the Union. The Catholic priests, scattered in the different provinces of the United States, are generally subscribers to a great amount; and encourage the sale of that sacred volume with the utmost zeal. I myself, on my last return from Baltimore, brought several English Catholic bibles with me; one of them at the particular request, and for the use of the Protestant minister's townsman, Mr. Henry Dopp, of Huntingdon, who will have no objection to shew it to the Protestant minister, in order to undeceive him.

As long as I live I intend to encourage the reading of the bible? and am not in the east afraid of incurring thereby the blame of my bishop, or the censures of the Catholic church. Is it not surprising, my dear friend, that I should be, during thirty years, a member of the Catholic church,—that I should live so many years

near the centre of Catholicity,—that I should be, during twenty-three years, an acting, though unworthy, minister of the Catholic church,—and during all that time was not clear-sighted enough to find out, that the Catholic clergy were in the habit of withholding from their people *the key of knowledge*, the sacred scriptures? You will ask me, probably, what then can be the reason that the accusation of concealing the scriptures is so generally brought against the Catholic clergy, by all Protestant ministers of every denomination? Is it possible that so many respectable characters would unite in propagating a palpable lie? Charity, my dear friend, forbids such a supposition. I am far from accusing the Protestant minister or his colleagues of propagating a wilful lie. I am sensible that a lie bawled out with an impudent assurance, by any person of weight and influence, is often received as an undoubted truth, and as such propagated by thousands, without the least suspicion of its falsehood. The first broachers of the accusation were guilty of a wilful lie. Rebelling against the lawful authority of the church, they had to give satisfactory reasons for their rebellion. Thus, they contrived numberless accusations against that church; charging the church with all the crimes and abuses of which many of its ignorant and corrupted members were guilty, and affecting to attribute

these crimes and abuses to the ignorance in which they were kept by the church, which, however, was to be attributed to their own neglect and corruption, or perhaps in many instances, to the negligence, corruption, and bad example of some of their teachers.

You are sensible, my friend, that the act or the neglect of one or more of the clergy, is not the act or neglect of his church. I have acknowledged, in my "DEFENCE OF CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES," and I do acknowledge again, that many of the clergy, as well as of the lay people, in the Catholic church, have been guilty of most culpable negligence, and even of very great crimes, which was particularly the case at the time of the pretended reformation; in consequence of which the curse of God fell upon the earth and caused many, struck with blindness, to forsake the church, in the bosom of which they would have found a remedy for all their spiritual maladies, and to follow the smoother and broader roads of the pretended reformation. The standard of rebellion being raised by the hand of pride, it was easy to persuade lust and luxury that eating is more pleasant than fasting, that a change of wives is more pleasant than being confined to one, that a confession made in general terms to God alone, is less restraining than a detailed one made to God's minister, that self inter

pretation of God's word affords a greater chance to the unruly passions of a corrupted heart than the submitting to the interpretation of the church, and that liberty and independence is more sweet than obedience and submission. Well might the reformers proclaim to the world to be ruled by the bible, when they granted to every individual liberty to interpret and to judge for himself.

What would be the consequence, if every individual in this country was permitted to interpret the law of the land for himself; and if the criminal, guilty of the most flagrant breach of these laws, enacted for the safety and protection of its citizen, was not obliged to submit to the interpretation and application of that law upon his particular case, made by the authority of the court and jury. The murderer would never find the law against the crime of murder, to apply to his peculiar case; the thief or robber would find his case entitled to an exception from the law against thieving or robbing; the blasphemer would find in his interpretation, security against the punishment inflicted by the laws against blasphemy. The laws then, although good and sufficient in themselves, would prove nugatory. The holy scriptures are the Christian's code of law. The church does not say "you shall not read it;" but the church says, "you shall not interpret it as you please." Scripture itself gives

us this caution." "No prophecy of scripture is made by private interpretation." 2 Peter i. 20.

The general council of Trent, session 5, chap. 1, has given strict orders for establishing lectures and expositions of holy writ, in churches, monasteries, and colleges; and the reason it gives is, that so "that heavenly treasure of holy scripture, with which the Holy Ghost, in his infinite bounty, has provided us, may not lie neglected."

But the same council knew, that as the law misinterpreted, is not the law, so also, scripture misinterpreted, is not the scripture,—not the word of God. The holy council knew that, according to St. Peter 2. iii. 16, many wrest the scriptures to their own perdition. Therefore, the council made a decree, session 4: "That nobody, relying on their own private judgment, presume to wrest the holy scriptures, in matters of faith or manners, to their own private sense, contrary to that sense which the holy church has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs, to judge of the true sense of scripture, or contrary to the unanimous consent of the holy fathers."

In addition to this we find a rule laid down by Pope Pius IV. but not a law enacted by the general council, laying an obligation on the bishops and parish priests, to restrain *those only* from reading the bible in the vulgar tongue, whom

they see so self-conceited or rash, as to be in danger of wresting it to their own destruction.

Read the letter of Pope Pius VI. to the archbishop of Florence, which is prefixed to our Catholic bible, and you will see how far he is from condemning the practice of reading the bible.

If, my dear friend, you blame the Catholic church, for opposing and condemning private interpretation of the bible, you certainly suffer your reason to be obscured and overruled by prejudice. Liberty, no doubt, is a blessing, but it should be confined to its own province, and within proper limits. Although we enjoy that blessing in this country, and that to the utmost degree consistent with safety, yet I do not find our government disposed to leave the interpretation of the laws to every individual; every one is compelled to submit in practice to the interpretation and judgment of the judiciary, no matter how much his own private opinion and judgment differs from that of the honorable court. Why then will you not allow the same dispensation, the same principles in church government, as the misunderstanding and misinterpreting of the laws intended for the salvation of man, would be attended with worse consequences than the misunderstanding and misinterpreting of the laws of the country.

The first reformers could not expect to succeed in making proselytes unless by pleasing. They could not please, except by flattering the passions. And as the main passion of man is the love of liberty and independence, they took care to flatter that particular passion by declaring their intention to emancipate nations from the yoke and tyranny which the Pope had imposed and exercised over them, contrary to the written word of God, which alone ought to be their guide. Their assertion was easily proved to the ignorant and the corrupt, especially at a time when real abuses practised by many clergymen, (though not authorized by the church,) furnished ample matter for declamation, and therefore a good opportunity for the reformers of exhibiting themselves, as burning with zeal for the glory of God.

At the period of the pretended reformation, the bible in the vulgar language was in but very few persons' hands; not in consequence of a prohibition from the church, but in consequence of the art of printing being but lately discovered. The first book that ever was printed was David's Psalter; printed in 1457, by Faust and Schoeffer, of the city of Mentz, about sixty years before the beginning of the reformation. It required many years to bring the art of printing to that degree of perfection which it has now acquired.

And before printing was known, and generally introduced, books of any kind must have been very scarce, and in the hands of very few; no wonder, then, if, during the first fifteen centuries of the church, the bible could not be in every body's hands.

You would do well, my friend, to ask the Protestant minister, from whom the first reformers received that bible, from which they took occasion to blaspheme the holy church of Christ, and on which they and their successors have bottomed all their manifold contradictory systems. Did that sacred volume rain down from heaven into their hands? No. Did the Almighty send the archangel Gabriel, the former messenger of happy tidings, to deliver the sacred volume into the hands of the reformers? No. Did they, through divine inspiration, discover it among the ruins of the holy city? No. Where then did they find it? In the Catholic church; which, during fifteen hundred years, had always carefully preserved this precious deposit of divine revelation. From it all the holy fathers of the church, all the pastors, lawful successors of the apostles, had derived that heavenly doctrine, recorded in many of their writings, for the instruction of their flocks, for the conversion of nations, and the edification of the church.

If the popes had become antichrists, the church

a sink of idolatry and superstition, in short the whore of Babylon; why did the clergy not destroy those pure sources of divine revelation, which in the course of time would have obliterated the very remembrance of their existence, and thus prevented a discovery of the changes and novelties which they introduced, and by which they totally perverted the holy religion of Jesus Christ?

The Protestant minister will be compelled to own, then, that it was in the very bosom of the Catholic church the first reformers found the sacred volume of scripture, which he says the Catholic clergy have carefully kept from the eyes of the people. The grand reason for admitting the books of scripture as divine and canonical, is, the constant and unvarying testimony and tradition of the Catholic church.

I hope, my dear friend, you are convinced by this time that we are innocent of that particular charge brought against us, of concealing the scriptures.

However, I have not done yet; I wish to be very particular on this important subject, and point out to you, as clearly as possible, the dangerous principles of the pretended reformation, and in opposition to them the doctrine of the Catholic church concerning the bible or the written word of God.

'There is nothing the Protestant gentleman can say in praise of the sacred volume, in which we do not heartily coincide. Call it a most beautiful flower in the garden of heaven, and we say, it is. But remember, that whilst the bee sucks from it the pure honey of life, the spider draws from it the poison of death. Call it the precious pearl, (Mat. xiii. 46.) for the acquiring of which, man should sacrifice even the whole of his property, and we say, it is. But at the same time we shall tell you not to suffer it to be trampled by swine. Call it the treasure of God's revelations, and we again say,—Yes. But we shall pray you to remember in whose hands was left the key of that precious treasure. (Mat. xvi. 19, xviii. 18.) Call it the bread of life, and we shall remind you that the most wholesome bread may occasion a surfeit, and even death.

From all I could find in Protestant authors, I cannot discover any fixed rule, by which Protestant ministers enable their hearers to find out infallibly the true sense of scripture,—the sense of the Holy Ghost. Some tell us that scripture is sufficiently plain, to convey its true meaning, at least by conferring one text with another. Others tell us, that common sense and reason is adequate to the task of discovering the true sense of scripture. Others again, that by sincere and fervent prayer any person may obtain grace to under-

stand the scriptures. I have no doubt but these several means have been used by Protestants to ascertain the meaning of scripture. What has been the result? Confusion and contradiction. The first reformers already quarrelled, foamed, and raged, cursed and excommunicated one another, on account of their different and contradictory explanation of the same scripture texts.

Men emancipated from the government of the church, divided and subdivided into numberless sects, which have increased and multiplied to the present day, their differences are not about trifling matters only; no,—they differ about matters essential to salvation; such as, baptism, the Lord's supper, &c. Now contradiction in such essential points is an evident sign of falsehood in cases where truth alone can save.

The Protestant rules, then, are altogether insufficient to give us the true interpretation of scripture, and to give us perfect security that we have infallibly found the true meaning of the Holy Ghost. I must confess, my dear friend, that I am astonished to see how easy it is to satisfy Protestants on the all important subject of religion. Running from one meeting house to another, they hear the sacred text expounded in different ways, often in contradictory ways; no matter,—to them it is still the word of God; although contradiction proves it to be, in many in

stances, the word of satan, or the word of death I cannot conceive how I could, with any degree of devotion, nay even with patience, listen to such arbitrary explanations, unless the preacher could satisfy me, that by some means he has found the key of that precious treasure, and is himself an infallible interpreter of scripture. Read the "Vindication of the Doctrines of the Reformation" with the utmost attention, and you will not find any thing satisfactory on this all important subject.

After what I had advanced on the subject of holy scriptures in my "Defence of Catholic Principles," page 14, and again, page 20—22, it became the Protestant minister's duty if he thought that I was wrong, to confute my arguments, and to prove that I was mistaken when I stated—

1. That the divine books cannot be interpreted unless by a Divine authority; and,

2. That the written word could not have been intended as the supreme judge to fix our belief in matters of faith; which I proved by four arguments.

Instead of confuting those arguments, (which indeed all the Protestant synods of the whole Protestant world are not able to do,) what does the Protestant minister do? Read his "Vindication," page 9—12, and you will find that by a kind of pious fraud, he misrepresents my very

plain words, and attempts to make his readers believe, that I condemn the reading of scripture.

I wish to be plain, very plain; so plain as to be understood by the meanest capacity; so plain as to leave no chance to sophistry. And I should be happy to see the combined wisdom of the Protestant world, guided by the love of truth, and fired with the heavenly fire of charity, arrayed against the arguments that are brought in support of our principles.

I say again, the sacred volume, although it is the word of God, is not the supreme judge to fix our belief in matters of faith. The letter we see, the sense we cannot see.

Christianity subsisted during many years without the gospels or epistles. It was established not by reading but by hearing. (Romans x. 17.) During fifteen centuries (printing not being invented) the sacred volume was in very few hands. The golden age of the church, the age of martyrs the age of saints, the age of pure and unshaken faith, was the age when the written gospel did not exist at all, or existed in very few hands.

To this day there are many thousands that cannot read, and yet their faith is strong, their morals pure; and I do not know whether I would be wrong in asserting, that the most humble, the most obedient, the most edifying Christians, the

most firm believers in the gospel, are generally found among those that cannot read.

Who are those, who separating from the Catholic church, and running in different directions, have established so many contradictory systems of religion? Protestant bible readers.

Who are those, who, foaming and raging continually against the Catholic church, and telling the most unwarrantable lies against her, are continually sinning against truth and charity, the main duties of religion? Protestant bible readers.

Who are those thousands and thousands, who forsaking the very fundamentals of the Christian religion, and rejecting all its mysteries, are erecting in Baltimore and in many other cities very large and costly churches for the worship of the Socinian Divinity? Protestant bible readers.

Who are those, and not few in number, who pretending a great regard for the gospel, deny the divinity of Christ and the eternity of punishments; men high in office, great in learning (remember I can prove what I say)? Protestant bible readers.

Who are those, who contrary to the precept of St. Peter, 2 Ep. i. 20, are continually calling the divine books before the judgment seat of their own limited and corrupted reason? Protestant bible readers.

Who are those, who measuring the profound mysteries of God by the narrow and limited measure of their understanding, make void those very mysteries, thus pronouncing that "this is my body," means, it is not my body; and also that "whose sins you forgive they are forgiven," could not mean what it says, because where is that power given to a sinful creature, and one who has to answer for his own sins, ("Vindication," page 19.) I ask, who are those men: Protestant bible readers.

I expect, my dear friend, you begin to perceive that the reading of the sacred volume alone, is not sufficient to fix the religious principles of any person; nay, that a person might have the whole bible by heart, and yet be at a loss what religious principles to adopt.

We respect the bible at least as much as you do. We believe it to be divinely inspired. We read it with fear and trembling. We kiss the sacred text every time we read the gospel of the day, in the mass. But we do not presume to interpret it: we do not throw that precious pearl before the swine. We caution our hearers against the danger of self interpretation; and do publicly acknowledge that we are not able, by the utmost exertion of our mental powers, to fathom its profound mysteries.

We do preach from scripture, it is true; but

far from presuming to put our own interpretation on the sacred text we deliver to our hearers that interpretation which the Catholic church gives us, believing the church to be guided by the spirit of truth for ever. John xiv. 16. Believing Christ the fountain of truth and salvation to be with his ministers until the consummation of the world. Mat. xxviii. 20. Believing the church to be the pillar and ground of truth. 1 Tim. iii. 15. Thus all our interpretations of all essential parts of scripture, are exactly alike; and were you to listen to the Catholic minister in Pekin in China, or at Loretto in Cambria county, Pennsylvania, you would find every where the same interpretation, the very same doctrine. The strong food of scripture digested by our holy mother the Catholic church, the sacred spouse of Jesus Christ, (Eph. v. 25,) we suck at her breasts, reduced to pure and wholesome milk.

Ask your Protestant minister what objection he can have against this our practice? He tells us in his "Vindication," that the bible alone is infallible. What does he mean by that? Does he mean that the dead letter of scripture carries with it its own interpretation? If it does, why then so many quarrels between the first reformers; and much more so between the numerous tribes of their offspring, Lutherans, Calvinists, Zuinglians, Wiclefites, Anabaptists, Quakers

Armenians and Gomarists, &c. &c. &c., and many more differing in most essential matters: necessary for salvation ?

Although this fact stares the Protestant minister in the face, as a most stubborn proof that the Protestant rule of faith is very deficient, and that the letter of scripture alone is not a sufficient guide to salvation, yet he attempts to establish his principle by an argument *a priori*. "If the scripture is not plain," says he, page 9, "then we must either say that the Holy Ghost could not dictate clearly, or that he would not. To say the former of which, would be blasphemy; and to affirm the latter, is, in effect, to say that the scriptures are no revelation of the will of God to men."

The answer to this argument is obvious. The Holy Ghost could express himself sufficiently plain; and he also did speak plain enough to be understood by applying to the proper interpreter, which the Holy Ghost himself points out, when he commands us to "hear the church." Mat. xviii. 17; also when he tells the apostles, by the mouth of Christ, "he that hears you hears me," Luke x. 16; again, when he tells us, by the mouth of St. Paul, 4 Eph. 11—15, that "he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the

work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all meet in the unity of faith, that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," &c. &c.

In consequence of the Protestant principle of private interpretation, the wind of doctrine blows every way; the members of the different Protestant sects are tossed to and fro; and instead of that unity of faith of which St. Paul speaks, there is nothing but contradictions, fluctuations, uncertainties and perplexities. To return then to your minister's argument, we say (without incurring the guilt of blasphemy) that the Holy Ghost would not express himself sufficiently plain, to be understood by every individual, guided by the faint light of his limited and corrupted reason only. The Holy Ghost, who has declared by the mouth of Christ, that "unless we become as little children, we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," (Mat. xviii. 3,) would have us bow down in the dust and acknowledge our dependence on the power and mercy of God; would have us be indebted to God alone for all we know; would have us make a generous sacrifice of our mental faculties, of our self-will, of our pride, &c. to the dictates of the supreme being; would have us "glory in nothing" (as St. Paul says, 2 Cor. xii. 5,) "but in our infirmities,"

“for power” (says he again, verse 9,) “is made perfect in infirmity.”

If the old man, according to Adam, sinned by preferring his own will, at the instigation of Satan, to the will of God, and thus falling under the curse of God, became a prey to all kinds of evils, temporal and eternal, the new man according to Christ, treading in the steps of his Divine Saviour, the most perfect pattern of humility and obedience, sees no surer way to recover the blessings lost, than by renouncing the treacherous light of his understanding, and the corrupt inclinations of his will.

My dear friend, ask the Protestant minister what he means when he tells us, (page 9,) that “he will take no guide as infallible but what is written in the old and new testaments?”

From what has been stated already, you must plainly perceive that the minister’s principle is very defective. I say defective; and in order to convince yourself of it, go to him and ask him to tell you, in the name of God, whose minister he considers himself to be? What security he can give you, that he understands, and does not misunderstand, the many texts of scripture? What security, that in expounding scripture, he never gives poison instead of wholesome food? As he lays no claim to infallibility your question may possibly puzzle him. Here are a few

more questions which will puzzle him no less. As all the reformers have adopted the same principle, of following no guide as infallible but what is written in the old and new testament, ask him, by what rule you are to find out *infallibly* which of the many hundreds of interpretations, made at different times, and by different reformers, is the right one? Ask him to tell you what St. Paul meant when he desired the Thessalonians (2 Ep. ii. 14) to "hold the traditions received by word, as well as those received by his epistle?"

Ask your minister to point out to you those unwritten traditions. Ask him also to point out to you the instructions which our blessed Saviour gave his apostles during forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom of God. (Acts i. 3.) Ask the Protestant minister next to point out to you the text of scripture which commands to keep holy the Sunday or first day of the week, and which does away the sabbath or seventh day? The next question you may ask your minister is, to shew you the text of scripture which repeals the prohibition made by the apostles against the use of blood? (Acts xv. 29.) Protestants eat blood puddings, and yet Protestants pretend to follow no guide as infallible, only what is written in the old and new testaments. Ask your minister why Protestant elders do not, according to the command of St.

James, chap. v. 14, anoint their sick with oil? And also, why Protestants do not according to the positive command of Christ, wash one another's feet? "You also ought to wash one another's feet: for I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, *so do you also.*" (John xiii. 14, 15.)

I wish to be consistent, and I wish every person to be consistent, or to act according to those principles which each one lays down for a guide and a rule of his conduct. If your minister is sincere when he tells you that he will take no guide as infallible, but "what is written in the old and new testaments," then we must conclude that whatever is written in the old and new testaments, is, in all cases, the minister's infallible guide, or in other words, that the minister thinks himself in duty bound to comply with all the positive injunctions of that sacred volume, and as a minister of Christ, also enforces the same injunctions on his hearers. Consequently, (as there is not a word to be found from Genesis to Revelation repealing the command of keeping the sabbath or Saturday) the minister must think himself in duty bound, to keep the Saturday, and to check and reprimand his hearers for keeping the Sunday instead of the day clearly appointed in scripture.

From the same principle of admitting no guide

as infallible but what is written in scripture, it is evident that he ought, both by word and example to discountenance the practice of eating blood puddings. (Acts xv. 29.) That he is in conscience bound, to admonish his elders to anoint their sick with oil, (James, chap. v. 14. ;) and to instruct his hearers to wash one another's feet, (John xiii. 14, 15.)

How your Protestant minister will extricate himself I do not know, but I sincerely believe, nay I am certain, that the above questions, which I have taken the liberty to suggest to you, cannot be satisfactorily answered, but by the ministers of the Catholic church. Their principle is, that the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, alone can be the true and infallible interpreter of his own words. Now if Christ did not deceive us, that holy Spirit of Truth is for ever in the church (John xiv. 16.) The church then, the pillar and ground of truth, (1 Tim. iii. 15,) is the grand tribunal which explains and expounds the sense of scripture; which discriminates between those commandments of scripture that continue in full force and those that have been abrogated or changed in some of their circumstances. In consequence of that principle, and consistent with himself, the Catholic keeps holy the Sunday, although he finds clearly written in the sacred volume the commandment of keeping holy the sab-

bath or seventh day; because in the authority of the church which is inspired by the Holy Spirit of Truth for ever, and which has received the jurisdiction of Christ, (Mat. xxviii. 19, and John xx. 21,) he finds a sufficient warrant for altering or transferring the obligation from Saturday to Sunday. The Protestant, on the contrary admitting only the letter of scripture as his infallible rule, and rejecting the authority of the church, has no other alternative but to conform to every plain injunction of scripture, and therefore to keep holy the sabbath or Saturday, or to acknowledge the insufficiency of the letter of scripture to be his guide. This acknowledgment is actually made in practice by nearly all Protestants, who in many instances, deviate from plain instructions of scripture, and yet do not consider themselves guilty of any breach of the law; and the same acknowledgment is made in plain words by some eminent Protestant divines.

“There are hundreds of particulars,” (says the Protestant bishop Montague, p. 396,) “which have been instituted by God in the point of religion, commanded and used by the church, of which, we own, that the scripture delivers or teaches no such things.”

It must be plain to you, my dear friend, that whatever God has instituted in the point of religion is of divine authority, let it be written or

not written, let it be found in scripture or not: and that our Divine Saviour has instituted very many things that never were written, is evident from the above quoted texts. 2 Thes. ii. 14, and Acts, i. 3, also from John, xxi. 25.

From the Protestant minister's principle it would evidently follow:

1. That the instructions which St. Paul delivered to the Thessalonians by word only and not in writing, are of no account whatever, because not found in the scriptures.

2. That the heavenly instructions given by our Divine Saviour to his apostles during forty days after his resurrection, are also to be despised and disregarded, because not written. From the Protestant principle of following no guide but the written word, those heavenly instructions are entirely lost to them, although they must have been very important, as being the last ones, and as being delivered to the apostles when on the point of commencing their ecclesiastical career and delivered to them after the resurrection of their master had fully confirmed their belief in his divinity, and of course enabled them to bear and to digest stronger food than before that glorious event.

3. From the same Protestant principle it follows, that the instructions given by St. Phillip. St. Bartholomew, &c. &c. are altogether lost, and

indeed very unimportant, because not transmitted in writing.

4. It also follows from the same principle, that the apostles' creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty," &c. &c. is not at all entitled to credit, and by no means the word of God, because not found in scripture.

You will plainly perceive, my dear friend, that the Catholic principle levels all those difficulties, and banishes all doubts on these different subjects. Convinced that the Catholic church is the holy spouse of Christ, we believe with a firm faith, which all the quibbles of your Protestant minister cannot shake, that this holy spouse of Christ has received the precious deposite of the Divine word, whether written or unwritten, that by the light of the Spirit of Truth infused into that church, (John, xiv. 16, 17.) she is always, and always will be, able to retain and to transmit that precious deposite of divine revelation, pure and undefiled, to the most remote ages. On the word of that church we receive the holy scripture as the word of God; on her word we receive the apostles' creed as the word of God; on her word we also receive as divine, whatever we know of the sacraments, of the government and hierarchy of the church, of the celebration of Sundays and holy days, &c. &c.; from her we receive the true sense and interpretation of the

written word; from her we know what books are canonical, and which of the many translations of scripture is faithful and genuine. You are sensible, my dear friend, that nothing less than an infallible authority is required, in order to satisfy us on all those different heads so as to leave no doubt on our minds. With regard to the written word or the holy scripture, we must be certain: 1. That the original scripture, viz. the old testament in Hebrew, and the new testament in Greek, is really the pure word of God, dictated by the Holy Ghost. 2. We must be certain which books belong to the canon of scripture, or in other words, which books are canonical, or of divine authority. 3. As the original scriptures have been translated into nearly all the different languages of the globe, we must be certain that the translation which is put into our hands, is a faithful translation, that does not deviate from the original, or from the sense of the Holy Ghost; for it does not require any arguments to prove that a false translation of any sentence of scripture is not the word of God. 4. Finally, As many sentences in scripture are hard to be understood, and admit of various interpretations, and as a false interpretation is not the word of God, we must have a certainty whether we understand or misunderstand scripture.

In order to acquire a perfect certainty on all

those different heads, and to banish even the possibility of a doubt, we must derive our knowledge on all those different heads from an infallible authority; from an authority that is not subject to error: and where shall we find this unerring authority? Not in the wisdom of man, nor in the collected wisdom of all mankind. For as St. Paul says, (1 Cor. iii. 19,) "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, I will catch the wise in their own craftiness." And again, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the prudence of the prudent I will reject." 1 Cor. i. 19.

In truth, my dear friend, the greatest wisdom you can attain to in this world, is the knowledge of your own ignorance, of your insignificancy, of your dependance on the great God in every case, in every instance, and every moment.

I ask again, where shall we find this unerring authority, to establish the canon of scripture, to point out the faithful translation, and to determine the true sense of scripture? No where, my friend, but in the Catholic church? which has the promise of the Spirit of Truth for ever. (John, xvi. 16.)

I think it necessary to dwell on each of those particular subjects.

THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE

must be determined by an infallible authority. Your protestant minister thinks himself able to establish the canon of scripture by the powers of reason; and he gives us a specimen of his ingenuity (page 48) in the following words:

“We reject the apocryphal books which were never received by the Jews, to whom the oracles of God were committed. Of these, some are only abridgments, &c. &c. Others have very much the resemblance of a romance, as the pretended histories of Judith and Susanna; and lastly, who would believe the history of Tobit and his dog except a Roman Catholic, who can swallow any absurdity.”

My dear friend, all the ancient fathers of the church agree that Esdras was the compiler of the Jewish canon, which contained twenty-two books. This compilation took place after the Babylonian captivity, and did not comprehend any books but those that had been written before the said captivity; and it does not appear that any other book was afterwards added to that canon. But remember that our Saviour Jesus Christ does not send us to the Jews, but to his church, for instructions, and that he invests the church with the spirit of truth for ever, in order

to make her a fit instructor in the ways of truth and salvation. Now, that holy church, in the third council of Carthage, Anno Domini 397, declares the Macchabees, Tobias, Judith, &c. to be divine books, as well as those contained in the Jewish canon; and the same declaration is made about 1200 years afterwards by the Council of Trent. Nearly all Protestants agree that the church of Christ was pure yet at the above period, Anno 397, and of course that credit is due to her declaration made at that time.

Is not the unanimous consent of the Catholic or universal church of all ages, a safer rule to establish the canon of scripture than the private and contradictory opinions of innovators? I say contradictory, for the different reformers did not agree about the different parts of scripture. Martin Luther tells us plainly, (vol. iii. p. 40, 41.) "we will neither hear nor see Moses, for he was given only to the Jews, neither does he belong any thing to us."

Again in his Table Discourses, chapter of the laws and the gospel, Luther tells us, "I will not receive Moses with his law, for he is the enemy of Christ, (page 118,) Moses is the master of all hangmen." And in his sermon of Moses, he says, "the ten commandments belong not to Christians; let the ten commandments be altogether rejected, and all heresies will presently

cease, for the ten commandments are, as it were, the fountain from whence all his heresies spring."

Islebius, Luther's scholar, taught the same doctrine. From him came the sect of Antinomians, who taught publicly, "if thou be a w——e, if an adulterer, or otherwise a sinner, believe, and thou walkest in the way of salvation * * * * *". All that busy themselves about Moses, that is the ten commandments, belong to the devil; to the gallows with Moses." (See Confession of the Manfield Ministers, in Latin. *Tit. de Antinomi*, p. 89, 90.)

Castalio commanded the canticles of Solomon to be thrust out of the canon. (See Beza in *Vita Calvini*.)

Calvin rejects these words of St. Matthew, "Many are called but few chosen." (Sermon on Matthew, xx. 16.)

Zuinglius and other Protestants affirm, that all things in St. Paul's epistles are not sacred, and that in sundry things he erred.

Rogers makes mention of sundry Protestants who reject as apocryphal the epistle to the Hebrews, of St. James, the first and second of John, of Jude, and the Revelations. (*Defence of the Articles*, art. 6, page 32.)

Calvin charges St. Peter to have erred in faith and morals. (See Calvin in *Gal. 2.* p. 510, 511.) There are other Protestant divines who admit the

very books as canonical which the Jews rejected, and which are admitted by the Catholic church.

The Calvinists of Geneva, in their preface to a bible published Anno 1551, by John Tornesium, have the following instruction to the reader: "We are not to stand to the censure of the Jews, in regard of this maiming of the canon of scripture: and in these books (rejected by the Jews) there are true prophecies and hidden mysteries,) which could not be spoken but by the Holy Ghost, &c. &c.

Dr. Bancroft, in his conference before the king, (page 60,) rejects the objections of the Jews, calling them "the old cavils of the Jews," &c.

Conradus Pellican, Protestant divine at Tigure, says in his dedicatory epistle, that "those books were always counted ecclesiastical and biblical; that even from the apostles' times they were read in the Catholic church with much reverence, although they were not produced in authority against the Jews, who received not these books into their sacred canon. * * * for the most part they clearly carry the right style of the Holy Ghost." &c. &c. It is evident, then, that the very first reformers did not agree among themselves on the canon of scripture, and that your Protestant minister is much mistaken when

he says (page 48,) that “the reformed church receives no other books but those which are acknowledged canonical by all Christians, &c., and reject the apocryphal books which were never received by the Jews,” &c. In fact, there are so many reformed churches, so many different opinions and variations even among Protestants of the same denomination, and so many changes in the faith and principles of the same reformed church from time to time, that it would be more correct to say that the principles of the reformed churches (not church) is to have no fixed principle, but to be guided by mere opinions.

It is your minister’s opinion that the histories of Judith and Susanna have very much the resemblance of a romance; and that the history of Tobit and his dog is an absurdity.

Ask your minister what he thinks of Balaam and his ass, and also of Samson and his foxes? Ask him also how he will ever succeed in establishing a firm unshaken belief in his canon of scripture, when he cannot bottom it upon an infallible unerring authority?

THE TRUE AND FAITHFUL TRANSLATION OF
SCRIPTURE,

ought also to be pointed out by an infallible or unerring authority, as nothing short of an infallible authority can give a perfect certainty to the

readers of scripture in the vulgar language, that what they read is the pure word of God.

The Protestant minister tells you "that the Roman church, or its rulers, in order to hide the absurdities they taught, were obliged to make a bible for themselves, so unlike the true translation of that sacred book, that they who can read it in the original, would scarce know it to be the same." (Page 133, of the Vindication.)

Those that live in the neighborhood of the Protestant minister, have a very good opportunity of reading the English Catholic bible, if they chose so to do; and any one clear sighted enough to discover the priest's spittle and the live coal in the holy water, (Vindication, page 75) will also be able to discover the enormous difference between the Catholic and the Protestant bibles.

The truth is, my dear friend, the two bibles are not quite so different as the minister would persuade you; but still there are some differences, even in some essential points, which, however, may escape the notice of the reader, unless he reads very attentively.

The question then is, (and a very important question) which translation is the genuine one?

The minister will tell you at once, that it is the Protestant bible. If he does, ask him which of all the Protestant translations he means? For you must know, my friend, that there are many

Protestant translations, differing from one another, as well as from the original; and you must know that the translations made by some Protestants are most bitterly condemned by other Protestants.

Zuinglius, writing to Luther about his German translation, has the following words: "Thou dost corrupt the word of God; thou art seen to be a manifest and common corrupter and perverter of the holy scripture; how much are we ashamed of thee," &c. &c. vol. 2, of the Sacrament, p. 412, 413.

Keckman, another Protestant divine, affirms, that "Luther's German translation of the old testament, &c., has its blemishes, and those no small ones." (See Keckman's System of Divinity, book 1, p. 188.)

I shall only mention two of Luther's wilful corruptions.

Where St. Paul (Rom. iii. 28) says "we account a man to be justified by faith, without the works of the law," Luther translates, "justified by faith *alone*," &c., to support his aversion to good works; and when admonished of this foul corruption, his answer was: "Sic volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas," &c., that is, "so I will, so I command, let my will be for a reason; Luther will have it so. The word, *alone*, must remain in my new testament, although all the Pa

pists go mad. If thy Papist shew himself angry for the word *alone*, forthwith tell him a Papist and an ass are the same thing," &c. (See Luther's German writings, vol. 5, p. 141—144.)

Also where it is said, (Peter, i. 10,) "Wherefore, brethren, labor the more, that *by good works* you may make sure your vocation and election." Luther here omitteth these words "*by good works*," which are also omitted in most of the English Protestant translations.

On the other hand we find Luther rejecting the translation of the Zuinglians, and calling them "fools, asses, antichrists, deceivers," &c. (See Zuinglius, vol. 2. ad. Luth. of the Sacram. p. 388, &c.)

The Tigurine translation was condemned by other Protestant divines; and as Hospinian writes in his book called "The Concord of Discord," p. 238, it was rejected with great anger by the elector of Saxony.

The translation set forth by Oecolampadius and the Protestant divines of Basil is reproved by Beza, "as wicked in many places, and altogether differing from the sense of the Holy Ghost."

The translation of Castalio, another Protestant, which Dr. Humfrey affirms to be, "thoroughly conferred, examined and polished," (see Humfrey De Rat. Interpret vol. 2. p. 62, 63, &c.) is

also condemned by Beza as sacrilegious and wicked," &c. (See Beza in Test. 1556, in Præf. and in Annot. in Mat. 3, in 1 Cor. and in Mat. 4, &c. &c.)

Concerning Calvin's translation, the famous Protestant, Charles Molinæus, affirmeth, that "Calvin makes the text of the gospel to leap up and down; he uses violence to the letter of the gospel; and besides this, adds to the text." (See Molinæus in his Translation of the New Testament, part 11, p. 110.)

The same Molinæus also charges Beza "to change the text in his translation."

King James thinks the Protestant translation of Geneva to be "the worst of all." (See Conference before his Majesty, page 46.)

Thus you see, that the very first reformers already quarrelled about their different translations of scripture. Now to speak more particularly of the English Protestant translations, we find great complaints made against them by Protestants themselves.

In the petition presented to king James by numbers of the Protestant clergy, page 75, they complain that "the book of Psalms alone, differs from the Hebrew in at least two hundred places."

Mr. Carlisle, a Protestant divine, asserts that the "English translators have depraved the sense of scripture, obscured the truth, and deceived the

ignorant: that they shew themselves to love darkness more than light, falsehood more than truth." (See p. 116, 117, &c., of Christ's descending into hell.)

The Protestant ministers of the diocese of Lincoln affirm, that "the English translation takes away from, and adds to, the text, and that, sometimes to the changing or obscuring the meaning of the Holy Ghost; a translation which is absurd and senseless," &c. (See the Abridgment which the ministers of Lincoln delivered to his majesty, page 11.)

Mr. Burgess, another Protestant, in his "Apology," sect. 6, excuses himself for not subscribing to that Protestant translation. "How shall I approve," says he, "under my hand, a translation which has many omissions, many additions, which sometimes obscureth, sometimes perverteth the sense, being sometimes senseless, sometimes contrary."

Mr. Broughton, a Protestant divine of great learning, wrote an epistle to the lords of the council, desiring them to procure a new translation of the scripture, and assures the Protestant bishops that "the English translation perverts the text of the old testament in eight hundred and forty-eight places; and causes millions of souls to run to eternal flames."

Had not king James then just cause to com

plain ' that he could never yet see a bible well translated into English.' (See Conference before his Majesty, page 46.)

Take notice, my dear friend, that the reformation had already existed about one hundred years, when these complaints were made; and remember here your minister's assertion, that nothing is to be taken as infallible but what is written in the old or new testament, which, however, according to the Protestant doctor Whitaker, "is not the word of God, unless it faithfully expresses the meaning of the authentical (or original) text." (See Whitaker's answer to Rein, page 235.)

From the testimonies of Protestants themselves then, you plainly see upon what foundation the edifice of the reformation was raised; to wit, upon the dead letter of scripture, corruptly translated, curtailed, and perverted, which of course was not the word of God, and which besides, every one was to interpret for himself.

The English Protestant bible, they pretend, is a faithful translation from the Hebrew and Greek originals. This I declare to be impossible. Why so? Because the Hebrew and Greek originals are no longer in existence. Time, that demolishes the strongest monuments raised by the hands of men, has also destroyed the originals of scripture. The present Hebrew and Greek texts are only copies, which in many places de-

viate from the original; of which I shall give you a few instances.

First, in the present Hebrew old testament we read, Isaias ix. 6, "*he shall call wonderful,*" &c. whereas it is evident from the context, and Calvin owns to it, that it must be "*he shall be called wonderful,*" &c. Again, in Psalm xxi. 17, where all christians read "*they have dug my hands,*" the Hebrew text says, "*like a lion,*" which has no sense at all. In Psalm xviii. 5, where we read "their sound hath gone forth into all the earth," which is quoted by St. Paul in the very same words, Rom. x. 18, the Hebrew text says, "*their line or perpendicular* went forth into all the earth," which the Protestant minister is perhaps more capable of explaining than I am.

Again, Genesis viii. 7, where we read "the raven went forth and *did not return,*" &c. the Hebrew text says "*did return.*" From the translation of the Septuagint, and from all the ancient fathers who have quoted that text, it must be "*did not return.*"

There are besides, whole sentences omitted in the present Hebrew text; for instance, in Exod. ii. 22. "And she bare another whom he called Eliezer, saying, for the God of my father, my helper, hath delivered me out of the hand of Pharaoh." These words must have been in the Hebrew original, as they are found in the Sep-

tuagint, which is a Greek translation from the Hebrew original, and also in St. Jerome's translation.

The present Greek text is not pure neither which I shall prove by a few instances.

1 Cor. xv. 47. Where we read, "the first man was of the earth, earthly: the second man from *heaven, heavenly,*" which Calvin confesses to be the true way of reading. The Greek text says, "the second man, *the Lord from heaven.*"

Rom. xii. 11. Where the vulgate, as well as the Protestant testament says "*serving the Lord,*" many Greek copies say "*serving time;*" which is evidently wrong, as appears from all the Greek fathers who have quoted the above text.

Moreover, it is evident that in many Greek copies, words are added to the sacred text; as, for instance, to the Lord's prayer, Mat. vi. the words "*for thine is the kingdom, power and glory,*" &c. which words are not to be found in any of the ancient fathers that have quoted and explained the Lord's prayer from the holy scripture.

In most of the Greek copies, considerable parts of holy writ are omitted; for instance, the last chapter of St. Mark, and the history of the woman apprehended in adultery. John viii.

The present Hebrew and Greek, then, of which the Protestant bible is said to be a translation, is not pure; of course the translation can-

not be pure, admitting it to be a faithful translation; which, however, is not the case, as I have proved by many Protestant authorities.

It is true that upon so many complaints being brought before king James, the bible was revised; but the most of its errors remained untouched, and continue in it to this day.

The Catholic church makes use of the Latin bible, called the vulgate, which was published by St. Jerome, under the pontificate of pope Damasus, sometime about the year 370. This is the bible which, the Protestant minister says, "the Roman church or its rulers, made for themselves, in order to hide the absurdities they taught, and which is so unlike the true translation, that they who can read it in the original, would scarce know it to be the same."

Many learned Protestant ministers are of a different opinion. Hear what Beza says, in his preface to the New Testament: "I do embrace, for the most part, the vulgate edition, and prefer it before all others." And in his Annotations on Luke i. "the old interpreter seems to have interpreted the holy books with greatest religion."

Dr. Humphrey, a Protestant minister, confesseth that "the old interpreter was much addicted to the propriety of words, and that over-scrupulously, which yet (says he) I interpret him to have done upon religion, and not upon ignor

ance." (See Humphrey de Ratione Interpret, book i. p. 74.)

Molinæus, another Protestant, declares that "he can hardly depart from the vulgar and accustomed reading, which also (says he) I am accustomed earnestly to defend: yea I prefer the vulgate edition before Erasmus, Bucer, Bullinger, &c., also before John Calvin, and all others." (See Molinæus on the New Test. part 30, and on Luk. 17.)

Conradus Pellican, another Protestant minister, finds "the vulgate edition of the psalter to agree for the sense with such dexterity, learning and fidelity of the Hebrew, that I doubt not (says he,) but the Greek and Latin interpreter was a man most learned, most godly, and of a prophetic spirit." (See part 2 of the Def. of the Minister, p. 136.)

"We grant it fit," says Dr. Dove, in his Persuasion to Recusants, page 16, "that for uniformity in quotations of places, in schools and pulpits, one Latin text should be used. And we can be contented for the antiquity thereof with the vulgate before all other Latin books."

In confirmation of this antiquity, Dr. Covell, in his Answer to Burges, page 94, tells you that "It was used in the church thirteen hundred years ago;" that is at present more than fourteen hundred years, or more than eleven hundred

years before the pretended reformation; and he himself doubts not "to prefer that translation before others;" and he adds, "that whereas there are many Protestant translations that disagree among themselves, the approved translation authorised by the church of England, is that which cometh nearest to the vulgate, and is commonly called the bishop's bible." (Covell to Burges, page 91.)

You see then, my dear friend, that all Protestants do not agree with your minister in condemning our Catholic bible; and I do not think that he is able to give any other proofs for his assertion, that the Roman Catholic rulers made that bible to hide the absurdities of their doctrine except his hatred against the Catholic church.

Hatred and spite, my friend, are dangerous passions, that blind the sight and obscure the understanding. Persons actuated by those passions lose sight of the very first principles of logic, and of all the rules of sound criticism, and condemn merely because they are determined to condemn.

According to the rules of sound criticism the vulgate bible used by the Catholic church deserves the preference before all the translations of the reformers.

1st. Because it was translated from the Hebrew and the Greek nearly 1400 years before the

pretended reformation, at a time that those original sources were much purer than they are at present.

2d. Because St. Jerome, the translator and reviser of that divine book, was, not only a man of very great learning, but in particular a most complete master of the three languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

3d. Because, after being appointed by Pope Damasus to revise and translate the holy scriptures, he transported himself from Rome to Jerusalem, and spent several years in perfecting himself in the knowledge of Hebrew, and in examining and comparing all the ancient manuscripts of the bible, which he was able to procure.

4th. Because the said bible, thus translated and revised by St. Jerome, was received by the whole Catholic church, at a time when even our adversaries confess it to have been the true church. The most of them suppose the whole world to have been buried in superstition and idolatry during the space of about eight hundred years before the pretended reformation, viz. from about the year 700 to 1500; but the above translation, adopted by the Catholic church, was made about the year 370.

Judge then, my dear friend, whether the vulgar translation, which the Catholic church has adopted as her standard of scripture, is not fa

more to be depended upon, as being the genuine, pure word of God, than any of those modern translations made by reformers, and made from a spirit of spite and opposition to the Catholic church? Made at a time when the original Hebrew and Greek did no longer exist in their purity. And made without the help of that infallible and unerring Spirit of Truth, which undoubtedly guided the holy Catholic church in approving and adopting the translation of St. Jerome: for Christ had promised, (John xiv. 16, 17, and xvi. 13,) that the Spirit of Truth, the Paraclete, should guide his church into *all truth*, and should guide her *for ever*. And certainly never was the fulfilling of that promise more necessary than on the solemn occasion of determining the important question “*Which is the pure and genuine translation of the original written word of God?*”

The reformed translators of scripture were left to the light of their own limited and corrupted reason only, when they undertook, out of corrupted and polluted sources, to draw the pure and heavenly doctrine of salvation. No wonder then, if those translations deviate in many instances from the pure word of God, as has been proved by the testimonies of numbers of Protestants.

You will now understand the several positions contained in the Pope's brief against bible socie-

ties, which the Protestant minister publishes in a tone of triumph (page 136—138,) because in it he finds it completely proved that the Roman Catholic church opposes the reading of scripture. The leading positions in that brief are :—

1. That the bible printed by heretics is to be numbered among prohibited books.

2. That the holy scriptures, when circulated in the vulgar tongue, have, through the temerity of men, produced more harm than benefit.

3. As a consequence of 1. and 2. that no versions of the bible in the vulgar tongue be permitted, except such as are approved by the apostolic see, or published with annotations extracted from the writings of the holy fathers of the church.

I do not find in the whole of the Pope's brief, any expressions more forcibly, more energetically, expressing the danger of false translations than those above-quoted expressions of the Protestant minister Broughton, in his epistle to the lords of the council, "that the English translation (used in his time) perverts the text of the old testament, &c.," "and causes MILLIONS OF SOULS TO RUN TO ETERNAL FLAMES."

The Pope calls the circulating false translations of scripture, and scattering the same by millions among the nations of the globe, "*a defilement of the faith imminently dangerous to souls.*" This is certainly correct.

If adding to, or taking away from, the words of God's revelation, will, according to Rev. xxii. 18, 19, accumulate on the person guilty of that sacrilege all the woes announced in the sacred volume, what else but curses and the most dreadful punishments have those to expect who overflow the world with false translations of the word of God, and thus practice the most criminal deception on millions of souls.

But even admitting the translation to be genuine, it is not by throwing the sacred volume by millions among the nations, that they will be converted to Christianity. Throwing the pearl before the swine (which is expressly forbidden) will never turn those swine into rational beings, and teach them to esteem that pearl.

The Catholic missionaries, who in all ages have preached the gospel, and converted many nations in every part of the globe, found it necessary to adopt a far different method in order to bring under the yoke of Christ millions of savages that had of human nature nothing but the outward form; that were more brutal than the tigers of the forest. With the most ardent charity, with the most heroic courage, and the most persevering patience, they hunted them up in their almost impenetrable forests, and renouncing all the commodities of life, they adopted the same mode of living, the same nourishment, had

nothing but the cold earth for their beds, in short they became savage with the savages, in order to gain them to Christ. (1 Cor. ix. 20, 22.) Many of those missionaries were massacred before ever they had any chance of announcing to them the tidings of salvation. Their persevering endeavors were crowned with success. About three hundred thousand families in South America alone, were persuaded to leave their forests and their vagabond way of living, to form settlements and to range themselves under the cross, the standard of Christianity; and it is proved by the testimonies of the Spanish governors under whose jurisdiction those Indian settlements were, and also by the testimonies of numbers of travellers, that those Indians were examples of Christian virtue and perfection, and that those vices which are so very common among the Christian nations were entirely unknown to them.

Take notice, my friend, that those nations were not converted by reading the bible, but, as St. Paul says, by hearing, (Rom. x. 17,) for none of them had any idea of a letter; and even after their conversion very few of them ever learned to read. Their days were spent in praying and laboring. Without ever diving into the profound mysteries of scripture, they listened and submitted with the docility of children to their fathers in Christ, and received from the church

the doctrine of salvation. In short they were not bible readers, but practisers of its commandments.

They were not improved enough to measure the immeasurable abyss of Omnipotence, but they had a sufficient share of learning to know that nothing is impossible to Omnipotence.

They were not wise enough to comprehend the profound mysteries of revelation, but had humility and grace enough to believe them.

They were not philosophers enough to pronounce on the possibility or impossibility of the mysteries, but had common sense enough to know that the God of truth could not be the author of lies and deception.

They had not pride enough to sit in judgment over the divine revelations, and to determine their sense and meaning by the feeble light of their reason, but they had sense enough to know that a church guided for ever by the Spirit of Truth, and being the pillar and ground of truth, could never deceive them.

They could not read the bible, but they received the heavenly doctrine therein contained, digested and accommodated to their limited understanding, from their spiritual fathers ; in hearing them they heard Christ himself, (Luke x. 16) and not being ingenious enough to know the wonderful power and virtue belonging to the

words "*it means,*" which changes flesh into bread, life into death, power into weakness, substance into shadow, they simply believed, without scrutinizing. They were all united in the bonds of faith and charity. Thus what the mere reading of the bible never was able to produce, was accomplished by humility and obedience.

Put the bible into the hands of the proud, luxurious and corrupt man, and guided by the corrupt inclinations of flesh and blood, he will find in it what will authorise his criminal practices; especially when he is told to interpret for himself. Thus the most abominable heresies, the most impious systems, and the most immoral practices have been deduced from the sacred volume.

It is not the reading of the bible itself, then, that the Pope condemns in his brief, but reading with a bad disposition; reading with pride and self-conceit; reading without deference to the interpretation of the church; and especially reading *in* false translations condemned by the church.

Before I close this subject I shall point out to you a few instances of false translations in your Protestant testament:

Roman Catholic Testament.

Protestant Testament.

Luc. ii. 14.

1. Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

Roman Catholic Testament.

Protestant Testament.

Matt. xix. 11.

2. He said to them :
All men *receive not* this
word, but they to whom
it is given.

He said unto them : All
men *cannot receive* this
saying, save they to whom
it is given.

John ii. 4.

3. And Jesus saith to
her : Woman *what is it to*
me and to thee? my hour
is not yet come.

Jesus said unto her,
Woman, *what have I to do*
with thee? mine hour is
not yet come.

Acts xix. 35.

4. And when the town-
clerk had appeased the
multitudes, he said : Ye
men of Ephesus, what
man is there, that know-
eth not that the city of the
Ephesians is a worship-
per of the great Diana and
of *Jupiter's offspring?*

And when the town-
clerk had appeased the
people, he said, Ye men of
Ephesus, what man is
there that knoweth not
how that the city of the
Ephesians is a worshipper
of the great goddess Diana,
and of *the image which*
fell down from Jupiter?

Rom. xi. 4.

5. I have left me seven
thousand men that have
not bowed their knees to
Baal.

I have reserved to my-
self seven thousand men,
who have not bowed the
knee to *the image of Baal.*

1. Cor. ix. 5.

6. Have we not power
to lead about a *woman a*
sister as well as the rest
of the apostles, &c.?

Have we not power to
lead about a *sister a wife*
as well as other apostles,
&c.?

Roman Catholic Testament.

Protestant Testament.

1. Cor. xi. 27.

7. Whosoever shall eat this bread *or drink* the chalice of the Lord unworthily, &c.

Whosoever shall eat this bread *and drink* this cup of the Lord, unworthily, &c.

Gal. v. 17.

8. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, &c., so that you *do not* the things that you would.

The flesh lusteth against the spirit, &c., so that ye *cannot do* the things that ye would.

Phil. iv. 3.

9. And I entreat thee also, my *sincere companion*, help those women, &c.

And I entreat thee also, *true yoke fellow*, help those women, &c.

Heb. xi. 21.

10. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and *worshipped the top of his rod*.

By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, and *worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff*.

Heb. xiii. 4.

11. *Marriage honorable in all*, and the bed undefiled, &c.

Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled.

2. Peter i. 14.

12. Brethren labor the more, that *by good works*, you may make your calling and election sure.

The rather, brethren give diligence to make *your calling and election sure*.

I have given you here a few instances of the corruptions of the Protestant testament. The Catholic texts quoted are a faithful translation from the Latin vulgate, which was translated from the Greek about the year 370, and adopted by the church, at a time when most Protestants acknowledge it to have been pure yet. The Protestant texts are not a faithful translation from the Greek, but seem to be wilfully corrupted to condemn the Catholic doctrine.

No. 2 and 8. *Cannot receive* instead of *receive not*, also *cannot do*, instead of *do not*, seems to establish the favorite doctrine of the first reformers, that it is impossible to keep the commandments. This was plainly asserted by Martin Luther. "Let this be your rule," says Luther, "where the scripture commands the doing a good work, understand it in this sense, that it forbids thee to do a good work, because thou canst not do it." vol. 3, p. 171. Again; "As it is not in my power not to be a man, so it is not in my choice to be without a woman. And as it is not in my power not to be a woman, so it is not in my choice to live without a man." Sermon. ad Matrim. vol. 5, p. 119.

This is saying plainly that it is impossible to live chaste, although God commands it.

No. 3. "*Woman, what have I to do with thee?*"

seems to authorise the contempt which reformers have ever shewn to the mother of Christ.

No. 4 and 5. The word *image* added to both texts, must have been foisted in, perhaps with the view of condemning Catholic images.

The addition in text 4, turns sense into nonsense. The Catholic text, "*worshipper of the great Diana and of Jupiter's offspring,*" is very intelligible; for it is known from the mythology of the ancients, that Jupiter was considered the father of the gods, and that the other pretended divinities were, of course, Jupiter's offspring. But I am much at a loss how to understand the Protestant text, "*the image which fell down from Jupiter.*"

In No. 6, where St. Paul only speaks of such devout women, as, according to the custom of the Jews, waited on the preachers of the gospel, and supplied them with necessaries, of which we see many instances in the gospel, the reformers say *a sister a wife*, instead of *a woman a sister*; in condemnation of the single life of the Catholic clergy.

From 1 Cor. vii. 7, 8, it appears plainly that St. Paul was not married.

No. 7. The reformers, that they may prove the necessity of receiving the holy sacrament in both kinds, have falsely translated "*eat and drink*" instead "*eat or drink,*" as is acknowledged by the

Protestant minister Steel, in his sermon on the Lord's supper. (See Morning Exercise against Popery, page 768.)

No. 9. "*True yoke fellow,*" instead of "*sincere companion,*" must have been adopted by reformers in order to intimate that St. Paul was married.

No. 10. The sense here is entirely changed by the addition of two words, "*leaning upon.*" The Catholic text represents the patriarch Jacob on his death bed, worshipping, in the spirit of prophecy, the Saviour in which alone he confided for salvation; whose power was prefigured by Joseph the saviour of Egypt; in whose rod, or sceptre, Jacob, by faith, beheld the future sceptre or power of the Mesias. But the reformers not relishing this relative honor, which savored too much of popery, took the liberty to accommodate the text to their own weak ideas and opinions. We would fain wish to know how the leaning on the top of a staff could be an argument of Jacob's faith?

No. 11. Here the word "*is*" is foisted in, probably to excuse the sacrilegious marriages of the first reformers, who had most solemnly consecrated themselves to the service of God in a single life, by a vow of perpetual virginity.

The Catholic text, "*Marriage honorable in all, and the bed undefiled,*" is a caution to those that are lawfully married. Let marriage be honora-

ble, and no liberties or irregularities admitted that would be contrary to the sanctity of the state of matrimony.

No. 12. The wilful omission of the words "*by good works,*" encourages the abominable doctrine of Luther and other arch heretics, that faith alone is sufficient for salvation.

You see then, my dear friend, how strangely lay people are imposed upon by false translations of scripture, which are given them as the pure word of God, upon which they are to build their faith, and from which they are to draw their religious principles.

You perceive also, how necessary it is, that there should be an infallible, unerring authority to point out the true translation of scripture.

It is no less necessary to determine

THE TRUE SENSE OF SCRIPTURE.

That the letter of scripture is not a sufficient guide to salvation is self-evident.

"The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."
2 Cor. iii. 6.

And the minister's repeated assertions, that he will take nothing as infallible but what is contained in the old and new testaments, is only an imposition on common sense.

In my "Defence of Catholic Principles," I laid down as a self-evident principle, that as the

written word may be misunderstood, even in matters essential to salvation, therefore it could not have been intended as the supreme judge to fix our belief in matters of faith, but that Christ must have provided, and actually has provided, a living, visible, and supreme authority, to decide infallibly, and without appeal, the true sense of scripture, &c. (See Defence of Catholic Principles, p. 21-25.)

Now sir, look at your minister's answer, (page 9-12,) and you will find it to be no answer at all.

To be sure, I do not blame him for not answering what he, and the collected wisdom of all Protestant ministers never could answer, but I must censure him for his want of candor and wilful misrepresentation of my argument, which he represents to be, against reading the scripture, whereas it is only against making the scripture the supreme judge of controversies.

All the woes and curses which he denounces against the Catholic priests, (p. 9, 10,) will not deter me from asserting the above principle; and if I had not made up my mind not to address your minister any more, for the reasons stated in my "Appeal to the Protestant public," I should certainly press him very hard, to give me a rule by which controversies about the sense of scripture are to be infallibly settled, settled without

appeal, settled in such a manner as to leave no doubt on the minds of scripture readers.

Was I to become one of your minister's hearers, I am certain that I should not be satisfied with his interpretations of scripture, unless he would prove himself infallible. Any Protestant sincerely desirous of salvation must feel very uneasy, when he, on the one hand, reads in the scripture, "Unless you believe or do such and such things, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven," and on the other hand, from his own ignorance, from the fallibility, and the perpetual contradictions of his ministers, can never promise himself that he has obtained the true sense of those essential passages of scripture. Your minister tries to supply this want of infallibility in himself by the boldness of his own decisions.

"It is evident;" "it is absurd," "it is contrary to reason," "we defy the world to shew a notion so absurd," "it is unscriptural," &c. &c. &c.: and also by quotations from certain celebrated characters, whose names sanction as truth the most palpable lies, such as Tillotson, Hume, Buck, &c. However, we shall have opportunities to notice some of their lies in some future publication; suffice it to say, that in Britain, where the Catholics have been persecuted ever since the reformation, and persecuted in the most cruel manner, deprived of all the privileges of

citizens, their priests hanged and quartered for saying mass, or even for coming into the kingdom, their schoolmasters transported for teaching, and hanged for a second offence, &c. &c., that in that country, I say, the only way for a clergyman or an historian to acquire popularity and to be promoted, was, as the English poet says, "Like a tall bully to lift his head and lie." It was by vomiting their bold and impudent lies against Catholics, from their pulpits and printing presses, that the hatred against popery was kept up, and the vengeance of the law brought down upon the heads of an unoffending loyal people. I cannot help noticing here the assertion of your minister (page 126.) "We who are Protestants have certainly a great advantage over Papists in that divine grace of charity. * * * * * we have never persecuted, and put to death with the most cruel torture, millions of our fellow creatures, because they could not believe impossibilities."

After this assertion of your minister, who will believe any thing he will say? The fact is, my dear friend, and I shall make it appear in some future publication, that (notwithstanding your minister's clamors about popish cruelty and persecutions) ever since the beginning of the reformation, the most cruel persecutions have been carried on, without exception, against Catholics, in every country where Protestants had the

power in their hands; and I engage to make it appear, that the balance of toleration is not in favor of your minister's church. But let us return to our subject.

Your minister ridicules the idea of an infallible authority to interpret scripture, and tells us repeatedly, in his "Vindication," that there is no infallible authority upon earth.

Ask him what security he can give you that his interpretations of scripture are correct?

He tells you in his "Vindication," and I suppose preaches the same from the pulpit, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church," MEANS, that death shall not prevail against the genuine members of the church. (page 14.) "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood," MEANS, that we must believe in Christ. (p. 24.) "This is my body, &c." "This is my blood," &c. MEANS, this is not my body, this is not my blood. (p. 27, 28.) "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven," and "I will give to thee **the** keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven," MEANS nothing at all, for where is that power (of forgiving sins) given to a sinful creature, and one who has to answer for his own sins? (page 19.)

"Faith is the substance of things to be hoped

for, the evidence of things *not seen*," (Heb. xi.) and "Blessed are they that have *not seen*, and have believed, (John xx. 29,) means nothing, for the foundation of our faith must rely on the truth of our senses." (page 29.) "Yet so as by fire," means, "yet so as out of the fire." (page 47,) &c. &c. &c.

Now, giving such explanations of scripture, in print, or from his pulpit to his congregation, is what your minister would call preaching the word of God. Pray, my dear friend, does this satisfy you? or does it not leave a certain uneasiness on your mind, lest perhaps your minister be mistaken in his interpretations; and lest perhaps what he gives you for the word of God, turn out to be the word of Satan? But you will tell me that the minister gives you arguments, and quotes authorities for his interpretations. Aye, true enough? he fairly overwhelms us with the number of his arguments; and he also quotes the learned archbishop Tillotson, the pious bishop White, the great Arabian philosopher Averroes, the great historian Hume, and the famous author of the Theological Dictionary, Buck. Admitting all those men to be men of candor, as well as men of learning, what weight can their authority, joined to all your minister's arguments, have in matters of revelation, in matters far more re-

mote from the reach of the human understanding than Saturn is from the earth ?

He attempts by arguments to prove the meaning of the Holy Ghost, but this is the very thing he is forbidden : “ No prophecy of scripture is made by private interpretation.” 2 Peter, i. 20

He attempts, by the force of arguments to explain the thoughts and the ways of God ; but the spirit of God condemns the attempt. “ As the heavens are exalted above the earth, so are my ways exalted above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts.” Isaiah lv. 9.

He attempts, by the calculations of human wisdom to establish the sense and meaning of divine revelation, but he forgets that God “ will destroy the wisdom of the wise,” and that God hath “ made foolish the wisdom of this world.” 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.

He is not ashamed to bring forward the testimony of Averroes, a pagan philosopher, and a man noted for his irreligion, in order, as he says, to put the Catholic church to the blush (p. 32,) and in order to overthrow the interpretations which the said church makes of the written word of God. Averroes lived more than three hundred years before the reformation, at the time when almost the only known Christian religion was the Roman Catholic. His attacks on the church were not confined to those tenets which

now distinguish it from the Protestant sects, but were directed also against the very tenets adopted by Protestants of all denominations. He called the Christian religion a religion impossible, the Jewish, the religion of children; and the Mahometan, the religion of hogs.

It is remarkable, although not surprising, that Protestants and philosophers, those educated in the schools of infidelity, have generally agreed in their opinions of Catholic mysteries. I say it is not surprising, because from the same principles as causes the same effects must necessarily flow. Both Protestants and philosophers place reason on the judgment seat; both form their opinions on religious subjects from the dictates of that judge; both reject what they do not comprehend; both only admit what is conformable to their limited notions. The Protestant, it is true, admits the letter of scripture; but as he takes the liberty to call it before the tribunal of his reason, and gives his reason full jurisdiction to decree without appeal, not what scripture says, but what it *means* to say; the Protestant belief is, of course, a system the offspring of reason, and only nominally deduced from scripture. The philosopher, perhaps more consistent, and more candid, applies to reason at once, without the farce of consulting scripture, which he de-

clares to be, together with all the mysteries of revelation, absurd and ridiculous.

What the Protestant professor Robinson says, in his book called "Proofs of a Conspiracy," &c. is much to the purpose here. "The spirit of free inquiry was the great boast of the Protestants, and their only support against the Roman Catholics; securing them both in their religious and their civil rights. It was therefore encouraged by their governments, and sometimes indulged to excess. In the progress of this contest, their own confessions did not escape censure; and it was asserted that the reformation which these confessions expressed was not complete. Further reformations were proposed. The scriptures, the foundation of our faith, were examined, by clergymen of different capacities, dispositions, and views; till by explaining, correcting, allegorizing, and otherwise twisting the bible, men's minds had hardly any thing left to rest on as a doctrine of revealed religion. This encouraged others to go further, and to say that revelation was a solecism, as plainly appeared by the irreconcilable differences amongst the ENLIGHTENERS of the public, and that men had nothing to trust to, but the dictates of natural reason. Another set of writers, proceeding from this as a point already settled, proscribed all religion whatever, and openly taught materialism and

atheism. Most of these innovations were the work of Protestant divines, from the causes I have mentioned."

Here is a candid acknowledgment made by a Protestant well acquainted with Protestant principles and their consequences. The liberty of self interpretation is the destruction of all religious principles, and must necessarily lead to infidelity. You must be blind, my dear friend, if you do not see infidelity gaining ground in the ranks of Protestantism, and especially among those that have received the most liberal education. What more common, than, to hear them deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the eternity of punishments. What more common than a total neglect and even a contempt of religious exercises, a contempt of the sacraments, and even of those sacraments which Christ declares to be absolutely necessary for salvation. The progress of infidelity among Protestants in this country, as well as in Great Britain (which a great orator in congress emphatically calls the palladium or bulwark of Protestantism) is truly alarming.

It is a matter of fact that the learned in this country, especially in the eastern states, are crowding the ranks of Socinianism, and having rejected the mysteries of the trinity, and divinity

of Christ, express their creed in four words—"I believe in God."

It is a matter of great scandal and alarm to the truly pious, to see a very large and most magnificent temple erected in the city of Baltimore, by those that believe Christ to be a mere man.

The progress of infidelity is far more alarming in Great Britain, where the very ministers of the church of England, the dignitaries of said church, nay, the very lords bishops, that have solemnly declared their belief of the thirty-nine articles, are openly preaching and printing against the fundamental mysteries of the Christian religion. Among those are conspicuous, Dr. Hoadly, lord bishop of Bangor, who shews a decided opposition to the doctrines of the blessed Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ, also, and more plainly so, Dr. Balguy and Dr. Sturges, prebendaries of the cathedral church of Winchester, Dr. Clarke, &c. &c.

I am alarmed, but I am not surprised. The leading principle of Protestants, (I mean the principle of self interpretation of the scriptures,) has been sapping the foundation of religion ever since the pretended reformation, and must, at no distant period, overthrow the whole fabric.

Poor, silly, blind reason, biased and led by passion and prejudice, is a false and treacherous guide, and never more so than when presuming

to dive into the ærcana of revelation, and with Satanic pride, to explain, without appeal, the meaning of the Holy Ghost. The wise man has said it, "the searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory," (Prov. xxv. 27.)

Those that search into the incomprehensible ways of God, those that shall presumptuously look into the ark of God's sanctuary, their weak eyes will be blinded with the excess of light and glory. Being thus blinded, they shall not even see what they used to see, and what they still would have been permitted to see, had they not made the rash and presumptuous attempt. Thus it is that thousands and thousands, relying on their reason to explain the mysteries of revelation, have lost sight of the very fundamentals of Christianity, and have become real infidels.

The following remarks, from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Thayer, formerly a Presbyterian minister in Boston, but since a Catholic priest, confirms the above remarks: "This uniformity which had subsisted among Catholics through all ages, made a lively impression on me, because I had never discovered it among Protestants. I had been connected with the heads of our sects; I had often conversed with them; I knew their sentiments; there were not two among them who agreed in the most essential articles: what is more, there was not one who had not varied in

his doctrine. I recollect that one of our most celebrated preachers once made the same declaration to me. “*When I preached in such a place,*” said he, “*I passed for heterodox; I was so at that time, for I had very erroneous sentiments; but I have changed since; and were I to preach there at present, my doctrine would be judged pure and orthodox; but this is common to all our preachers, I do not know one who has not, like myself, varied in his doctrine.*” This declaration made no impression on me at the time he was speaking; but it has occurred since, and has given rise to many reflections.” * * * * *

“This instability of our leading men in their doctrine caused me much pain. I saw that it was an inevitable consequence of the fundamental principles of Protestants, which constitutes each one the judge of his own belief. By this principle there can be no fixed rule of faith. It is this which causes the eternal contradiction of ministers among themselves, and the frequent variations of each of them in their doctrine. I had endeavored to conciliate their systems together, but could find no other way than by supposing it sufficed to believe in Jesus Christ, and to intend to honor God; but I soon found that this method, with which I was much pleased, tended equally to reconcile the most opposite and monstrous sects; I consequently, from day

to day, gave myself greater scope, and fixed no bounds to the liberty of thinking; and in a short time I should have adopted a system of toleration in its greatest extent. Protestants vainly pretend that they admit scripture for the rule of their faith. Since they acknowledge no living authority to determine its sense; since each one is suffered to give it a private interpretation, it is impossible to convince them of error; and when the Socinian, for instance, says, that he cannot find in scripture a demonstrative proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ, no one has a right to require, that he should believe this dogma, or to condemn him because he rejects it. This principle goes farther, and leads the man who reasons justly, to an indifference to all religion, and saps the very foundation of Christianity, by establishing the private judgment of each individual the supreme arbiter of his creed." (See "An Account of the Conversion of the Rev. John Thayer, lately a Protestant Minister." London edition, p. 15—18.)

Your Protestant minister then will not be surprised if all his arguments, his assertions, his decisions, "*it is certain,*" "*it is evident,*" &c., will never make the least impression on the mind of any Roman Catholic that knows his religion, and has been taught to view all the attempts of human reason in fathoming and explaining di-

vine mysteries and revelations in the same light as he would the attempt to penetrate into the third heaven. This is not said through any disrespect or contempt for your minister. Admitting him to be the wisest among the wise, and the best among the good, it is a fundamental principle among Catholics, grounded on their idea of the Infinite Being that is the author of revelation, and grounded on his own plain words, that all human wisdom is inadequate to the task of explaining divine revelation, and that none but God can explain the words of God.

“Our faith does not stand on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.” 1 Cor. ii. 5.

It is then in vain for the Protestant minister to tell us, that the learned and pious archbishop Tillotson SAYS, that the pious bishop White beautifully EXPLAINS, that the Arabian philosopher scornfully LAUGHS, that the sleight-of-hand man blasphemously mocks the words of Christ by saying “*Hocus pocus.*” You are all welcome, gentlemen, we say, heartily welcome, to take your way; you may say and unsay as you have done ever since the beginning of YOUR REFORMATION; you may laugh till you split your sides at our folly; you may hocus pocus the scriptures into whatever shape you please; you may “beautifully explain” the words of Christ, till you explain all the substance into

empty figures; but permit us to take our own way. We are fools, you say; we sincerely believe it; and it is because we believe ourselves to be fools that we do not wish to undertake to explain the divine word, but apply to the church to know how we are to understand the several texts of scripture. We are such fools, that we are not able to conceive how a church built upon a rock by the hands of Omnipotence, can ever fall, especially when the sacred promise of Eternal Truth is pledged for its everlasting duration. We are so stupid that we cannot conceive how the ministry of Christ, that have the promise of the Spirit of Truth FOR EVER (John xiv. 16.) ever could have become teachers of falsehood, and false interpreters of scripture. We are so blinded by prejudice, that we cannot understand, how the apostles or their successors, to the very end of time, can ever deviate from the primitive doctrine, whilst Christ fulfils his promise to be with them ALL DAYS until the consummation of time.

Such is our folly, my friend. And take notice, that this our folly has kept us these eighteen centuries in perfect unity of faith, whilst the wisdom of reformers has caused them to divide and subdivide into numberless sects, differing from one another even in the most essential and fundamental points of religion. Yes we

may defy the whole world to point out one single instance of variation in any article of our faith, or one single instance of difference in matters of faith between different parts of the Catholic world. Your minister, jealous of this unity, which distinguishes the Catholic church from all the sects, fills two pages (101, 102,) with arguments to prove that we are divided and distracted with dissensions and contests of various kinds, of which he quotes many instances. Vain attempt, my friend. As men, we have been divided, and will be divided on many points of doctrine, which have been derived from mere human knowledge, or are deduced by human arguments, but are by no means necessary for salvation, or have not been as yet determined by the church, thus : whilst the whole Catholic world is agreed in the belief of the infallibility of the whole body or a majority of pastors united with their head, great disputes have been carried on between some divines on the question, “ whether the Pope was infallible or not ?” Thus again, whilst the whole Catholic world is agreed in believing the Blessed Virgin a powerful intercessor in heaven with her divine son, Jesus Christ, great disputes are carried on between the divines of the Catholic church on the question, “ whether she was conceived in original sin or not ?”

In the third century a great dispute took place

between St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and Pope St. Stephen, on the question, "whether baptism administered by heretics was to be considered valid or not?" The whole church having decided the question in the affirmative, it has never been a matter of dispute since.

What your minister adds (page 102,) about the pretended Catholic sects called Georgians, Mingrelians, Copts, Abyssinians, &c. &c. is only intended for a joke, for he well knows, that those are the names of nations, not of sects, and nations that are schismatics, not belonging to the Catholic church at all.

I repeat it, my dear friend, Catholics who constitute about three-fourths of the Christian world, are perfectly united in the belief of all articles of faith necessary for salvation.

All agree, that out of the Catholic church there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

All agree that baptism remits original sin, and is necessary for salvation.

All agree that there are seven sacraments instituted by Christ.

All agree that the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the power to forgive and retain sins, were given to the apostles and their successors to the end of time.

All agree that Christ is really present in the eucharist, and therein, is both our victim of propitiation and the spiritual food of our souls.

All agree that the Pope is the successor of St. Peter, and the visible head of the church.

All agree that the scripture, which *we* use, is the pure word of God.

All agree that the church is the living and infallible tribunal appointed by Christ to determine the sense of scripture, and to hand down divine and apostolical traditions from age to age.

All agree that Christ is our only mediator, and that from his merits alone all blessings flow.

All agree that it is good and wholesome to apply to the intercession of the saints in heaven.

All agree that there is a place of temporary punishment after this life, for those who were not in this life perfectly purified from the dross of sin.

All agree that it is good and wholesome to pray for the dead.

All agree that it is useful and commendable to keep and to honor (not to worship) religious pictures, crucifixes, &c. &c.

And why are they all agreed? Because they do not presume to interpret scriptures, which would soon create as many different sects among them as there are among the Protestants. They all apply to the church for the sense of scripture. From the church they learn what texts of scripture are to be understood in the literal sense, and what texts in a spiritual sense; also which

of the many spiritual senses of which a text may be susceptible is the true one; for their are different kinds of spiritual senses noticed by divines, to which, for the full understanding of scripture attention must be paid, viz.

The allegoric sense, which relates to faith.

The anagogic sense, which relates to eternal life.

The tropologic sense, which relates to morals

Although it is admitted as a fundamental principle of religion, that each and every text of scripture is most true, as being the word of God, yet each and every text is not always true in every one of the above-mentioned senses. It is of course necessary for the right understanding of scripture, to know, by the direction of the church, in which of the above senses the several texts are to be taken; otherwise we will often be tempted to believe many of those texts to be false and contradictory, of which we have a most curious instance in page 15 of your minister's "Vindication," where he attempts to sweep off, like so many cobwebs, no less than four of Christ's solemn promises, by opposing to them corresponding promises made to the Jewish church, which latter promises (if I understand him right) he intimates not to have been fulfilled.

To give his argument a logical form, it runs thus: Almighty God had made solemn promises

to the Jewish church, to "dwell among the children of Israel," &c. "To reign over them in Zion from henceforth and for ever," &c. &c. Now Almighty God did not fulfil his promises, for the church of Judah has failed; therefore the promises made by the same God, Christ Jesus, "to be for ever with the church," "to send the Spirit of Truth," &c. &c. ought to be disregarded.

Here is logic, here is wisdom, but wisdom, merely human; such wisdom as the foolishness of God confounds. (1 Cor. i. 25.)

The very idea of a God the fountain of truth, forbids the supposition of promises made and not fulfilled. All promises made by Almighty God to the Jews, or by our blessed Saviour to the church, were undoubtedly fulfilled. We are not always able to discern in what way they have been fulfilled, because the feeble light of our reason is not always able to distinguish in what sense the promises are to be understood; but the Spirit of Truth infused into the church, is very able to unravel the mystery and to level all difficulties. By this authority we are told that Jerusalem or Zion, which literally is a city of Juda, allegorically means the church of Christ on earth; anagogically, means the kingdom of heaven; tropologically, means the faithful soul. If we take the promise of God to the children of Israel in the literal sense, it will not be found true:

but if we take it in the allegorical sense it is certainly most true.

Had your minister made those distinctions, he certainly would not have made use of God's promises under the old law in order to invalidate the promises of Christ in the new. On the contrary, he would have seen the connection of both, and would have been convinced that the promises in both cases relate to the same object, and are of great support to each other. To understand this better, let us take a general view of revealed religion, and we will soon perceive that the old and the new testaments only form one system of religion, the rites, ceremonies, sacrifices, and precepts of which entirely relate to Jesus Christ the Mesias. Before his coming, viz. under the old law, to Jesus Christ to come; and after his coming, viz. under the new law, to Jesus Christ already come.

Jesus Christ himself shews this connexion and continuation, when he tells us, "I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." (Mat. v. 17.) And the promises which he makes with regard to the indefectibility, perpetual visibility, infallibility, or unerring authority of his church, are only a repetition and a confirmation of those promises made repeatedly by his servants the prophets, some of which the Protestant minister has quoted (page 15.) He promises "to reign over them in Zion

from henceforth and for ever." (Mich. iv. 7.)
 "This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell."
 (Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14.) Here are some more.
 "This is my covenant with them, says the Lord:
 My spirit that is in thee, and my words that I
 have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy
 mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out
 of the mouth of thy seed's seed, says the Lord,
 from henceforth now and FOR EVER." (Isai. lix.
 21.) "And I will make a covenant of peace
 with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant
 with them; and I will establish them, and will
 multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the
 midst of them FOR EVER. And my tabernacle
 shall be with them; and I will be their God, and
 they shall be my people." (Ezekiel xxxvii. 26,
 27.) Jesus Christ confirms those very promises
 when he tells his apostles, "Behold I am with
 you all days," &c. and when he promises them
 the Spirit of Truth for ever, &c.

You see, my friend, how Catholic unity in explaining scripture, and in all matters of faith, necessarily flows from Catholic principles, and how divisions among Catholics never can take place, only concerning such matters as have never been in any way determined by the church. Protestant divisions necessarily flow from the Protestant principle of self interpretation; as it always has, it always will, prevent that unity

which is a main characteristic of truth, and the **reverse** of which is a sure sign of falsehood. I do not know whether the Protestant minister is in earnest when he talks of a unity made up of the aggregate of contradictions, which in the language of theology might be styled "CONCORDIA ECCLESIARUM DISCORDANTIUM."

I will give you his very words, (page 117 of the "Vindication") which purport to be an answer to mine (pages 129, 130, of the "Defence of Catholic Principles.") The question which I proposed was, "Comparing together those many hundred religious systems, which your fruitful reformation has produced, contradicting one another in the whole or in part, is it uncharitable to say, that but one of them (if any at all) can originate in the fountain of truth, &c.?" Here is your ministers answer :

"No reason can be assigned, why churches of different communions may notwithstanding be true parts of the true church, so long as they adhere to and hold the essentials of a true church. Indeed, so long as divisions and separations remain, there is a criminal schism lying somewhere. But still those schismatical churches are parts of the true church ? their schism does not cut them off from being members of Christ's kingdom. It is certain there were separations and schisms, and different communions. even in the earliest

times of Christianity, even in the church of Corinth when one would say, 'I am of Paul, and I of Apollo, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ,' &c.

Here is something very curious, "*the true church of Christ composed of schismatical churches;*" that is to say in plain English, the true church composed of parts not belonging to it; the kingdom of Christ made up of materials belonging to the kingdom of Satan; and truth composed of an aggregate of falsehoods and contradictions. *Risum teneatis amici.*

St. Paul had a different idea of the church of Christ when he wrote to the Ephesians, that being sanctified by Christ it became a glorious church, having neither spot nor wrinkle, holy and without blemish. (Eph. v. 26, 27.) Also when he calls the church "the pillar and ground of truth." (1. Tim. iii. 15.)

There is a criminal schism somewhere says your minister, but in the church of Christ there is a criminal schism no where, for there is no spot, no wrinkle, no blemish at all; nothing but truth, holiness and perfection. And when St. Paul blames the Corinthians for contending and boasting about their teachers, he does not even intimate that there were schisms or different communions among them; on the contrary, he plainly tells them, that those teachers were laborers in the same vineyard of the Lord. "I

have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase." (1. Cor. iii. 6.)

They all taught the same doctrine, were teachers of the same church, and perfectly united in the same faith. You plainly see, then, that your minister's answer is no answer to my question, the amount of which was, whether an aggregate of contradictions could form unity? I asked, and I now ask again, whether the necessity of baptism for salvation, and the non-necessity of baptism, can both be admitted as articles of faith in the same church of Christ?

Whether in the same church of Christ one minister can be sent by the God of truth to preach up the real presence of Christ in the sacrament, as Luther did, and another minister sent by the same God of truth, to tell you that the former is a liar, and that there is nothing in the sacrament but bread and wine?

Whether Christ can send one set of ministers to preach up the insufficiency of communion in one kind, which is the doctrine of your Protestant minister and others, and also send ministers to preach up the sufficiency of one kind, the doctrine of the Calvinist Synod of Poitiers and La Rochelle, &c. &c.?

In short, whether Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Gomar, Arminius, Fox, &c. &c. who contradict one another in the most essential points of doc

rine, in those very matters which Christ declares essential for salvation, whether all those can be considered ministers of the same God of truth? and whether their churches or communions are to be considered as parts of the holy church of Christ? Your minister says, Yes. Hear, my friend, what a celebrated English poet says :

In short, in doctrine or in discipline,
 Not one reform'd can with another join ;
 But all from each, as from damnation, fly ;
 Nor union they pretend, but in non-popery.
 Nor, should their numbers in a synod meet,
 Could any church presume to take the seat,
 Above the rest, their discords to decide,
 None would obey, but each would be the guide ;
 And face to face dissensions would increase
 For only distance now preserves the peace :
 All, in their turns, accusers and accus'd,
 Babel was never half so much confus'd.
 What one can plead, the rest can plead as well,
 For amongst equals lies no last appeal,
 And all confess, themselves are fallible.
 Now since you grant some necessary guide,
 All who can err are justly laid aside :
 Because a trust so sacred to confer
 Shews want of such a sure interpreter,
 And how can he be needful who can err.
 Then granting that unerring guide we want,
 That such there is, you stand obliged to grant ;
 Our Saviour else were wanting to supply
 Our needs, and obviate that necessity ;
 It then remains that church can only be
 The guide which owns unfailing certainty.

DRYDEN

It would surprise you much, my dear friend, were you to know the wonderful contradictions in most essential points of doctrine not only between Protestant ministers of different denominations, not only between ministers of the same denomination, but even between the doctrine of the same minister at one time and his doctrine at another time.

We will begin with Martin Luther, the father of the reformation, whom the learned bishop Tillotson styles a bold or a rough wedge, fit to split the knotty block of Popery, which however is not split yet.

Luther says, in the seventh volume of his works, edition of Wittemberg, page 32, A. D. 1551, that there are seven sacraments, but in the 12th article on confession, page 74, and again in the 13th article on the sacraments, he asserts "there are only three sacraments." Again, vol. 7, Sermon of the new testament, page 34, he says there are five sacraments. In the 7th vol. page 350, Luther teaches that the holy sacrament of the eucharist ought to be revered and adored, but in the 32d article against Henry king of England he teaches the reverse.

In his writings against Zuinglius and Oecolampadius, Luther requires (article 16,) that we submit to the decisions of church councils; but in his writings against the king of England, vol. 7, chap. 15, page 262, he teaches that there is

no obligation to submit to the decisions of any councils.

In his sermon on the first commandment he maintains the merits and intercession of saints, but in his Sermon de Mammona he flatly denies the same.

In vol. 8, page 27, on the 122d psalm, he maintains that baptism confers grace : also in chap. 6, Genes. vol. 5, p. 53, that it blots out original sin, and in his sermon 2nd for Trinity Sunday, on John iii. that it is necessary for salvation. But in vol. 3, page 349, on good works, and again, in vol. 7, page 96, baptism does not blot out original sin, and is not necessary for salvation, &c. &c. &c.

These are only a few instances among many, which I could quote, to prove that the very father of the reformation contradicted himself in most essential parts of doctrine.

Now hear what the first reformers say of one another, and there you will be surprised to find them tearing one another like wild boars, instead of joining hand in hand in their spiritual campaign against what they called Antichrist and the whore of Babylon :

“ We censure in earnest as heretics and aliens from the church of God, all Zuinglians and sacramentarians who deny Christ’s body by the carnal mouth in the venerable eucharist.” (Luther Cont. Art. Lovan. Theo. 27.)

Conrad Schluoselburg, a Lutheran divine, speaking of the Calvinists says, that "Satan speaks by the Calvinists as by his own organs and instruments." (Lib. 3, art. 8.) John Modestus, another Lutheran divine, says, "they are no Christians, but baptised Turks and Jews."

Shutre, in his preface to the Fifty Causes, tells us that the "Calvinian profession is a sink whereunto many heresies flow, and the very last anger of Satan, which he, stirred up with fury, exercises against Christ and his church."

"Let any holy or friendly reader, (says Osiander in *Enchiridion Contra Calvin*, p. 267,) think what deadly poison Satan pours into men under the Calvinian doctrine, by which all Christianity is almost overthrown."

Now hear what other Protestant divines say about the church of England.

"Ministers of the church of England are Egyptian enchanters, limbs of the devil, sycophants, angels of hell, in whom are the uttermost deceitful and effectual delusions of Satan." (Bernard in his book of *Seperatists*, *Schism*, page 72.)

The Protestant author of the *Dangerous Positions* says, "the church of England ministers put no difference between truth and falsehood, betwixt Christ and Antichrist, between God and the devil. They are an antichristian swinish rabble, enemies of the gospel," &c. (lib. 2, c. 9.)

“They are all infidels,” (says Allison) ‘that go to the late church of England—it shall be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the court of parliament by which the Protestant religion was confirmed. The English congregation consists of all sorts of unclean spirits, and is no member of Christ. * * * * * Their sacraments are no sacraments; it is a very Babylon.’ (Reply to Usher 24—5.)

Here what Castalio, another Protestant, says, in speaking of Geneva, the very centre of the Calvinian reformation.

“They name their Geneva the holy city, and their assembly Jerusalem; but in truth we should call it, O Babylon, Babylon! O infamous Sodom and Gomorrah!” (Castalio apud Recium, p. 54.)

Sir Edward Sands affirms that “the contentions of Protestants tend mainly to the increase of Atheism within, and Mahometism abroad.” (Ed. Sands’ Relation of Religion, 4, 5, 6.) And Zanchius, another Protestant, affirms that “Atheism has been brought out of hell by the ministers of Satan in some of the reformed churches.” (Zanch. in his Epistle before his Conf. p. 7.)

Mr. Perks in his Dedicatory Epistle before his Apology, speaking of the contentions in England concerning religion, complains that, by it, settled minds are **distracted**, the parts of the same body

dismembered, and religion itself brought to be a matter of mere dispute and altercation, not without fear, that it befal unto us as it did to the builders of Babel. These contentions are no small preparatives to Atheism, so that we may say * * * * * that there are as many faiths as wills, and as many doctrines as names of men ; * * * * * in so much, that many are brought to their wit's end, not knowing what to do.

The Protestant bishop Bilson, of Winchester, (on Church Government, chap. 16,) and the above quoted Ed. Sands. both complain of these contentions, and lament that "they are past all hopes of remedy." And so they are ; for I have proved that these multiplied differences and contradictions, even in matters of the first importance, necessarily flow from the Protestant principle of self-interpretation ; of course they must continue, and even increase and multiply, by forming more and more sects, whilst it shall continue to be a fundamental principle that every one must draw his religious system from scripture interpreted by himself.

You would be much surprised, my dear friend, were you to read the creeds or professions of faith formed by the first reformers, by those who are said to have been inspired, and sent by the Almighty to reform the church ; and were you to compare them with the professions of faith of

modern Protestants. Supposing the assertion true, supposing the reformers to have been like the first apostles, inspired with the holy Spirit of Truth, what must be the consequence? The necessary consequence is, that their professions of faith, formed by inspiration of that Holy Spirit, must be perfectly true in all its parts. The further consequence is, that the same professions of faith ought to be, at the present day, the standard of all Protestants in every part of the world, for what is true and genuine divine doctrine in 1500 must be true and genuine divine doctrine in 1800, and what is true divine doctrine in Germany, must be true divine doctrine in England or America. How much would you be surprised then to read in the Confession of Augsburg, which is the first standard of faith, formed by the reformers themselves :

Art. III. "Mass is retained by us, and celebrated with utmost reverence. The usual ceremonies are likewise mostly all preserved," and,

Art. IX. "Private absolution is to be retained in the churches."

Now take up the XXXIX Articles of the church of England, and their book of Common prayer, which may be called the first standard of faith of English reformers, and you find in art viii, the three creeds admitted; the apostles' creed, the Nicene creed, and the creed of St.

Athanasius, which positively asserts that “he that does not hold the Catholic faith whole and entire, shall, without doubt, perish for ever.” In art. xx. you find a declaration that the church has authority in controversies of faith.

You also find in the Order of Visitation of the sick confession recommended to be made to the minister, and absolution by him pronounced in almost the very same words used by the Catholic church.

In the Ordination of Ministers you find the following words: “Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sin thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.”

In consequence of this, you also find numbers of the primitive Protestant bishops and ministers maintaining those doctrines, such as Cranmer, Ridley, Jewel, Parker, Hooker, Ailson, Andrews, Pearson, Laud, Gunning, Ken, &c. &c.

By the 5th canon of the Convocation, A. D. 1603, it is decreed, “Who-soever shall affirm that any of the xxxix Articles are in any part superstitious or erroneous let him be excommunicated.”

After reading these solemn professions of faith made, (it is said,) by inspired reformers, and adopted in so solemn a manner, who would not exclaim “thank God, the grand work of the reformation is accomplished, the standard of faiths planted, the colors of Christianity are flying

the dark clouds of Popish superstition and idolatry are scattered, and the sun of divine revelation is illuminating the globe." No such a thing my friend.

The first reformers proved themselves to be quacks: they did not understand the scriptures. Their reformation must be reformed again. It will be found, under king Edward VI. that Christ is not present in the sacrament, and the words expressing his real presence will be expunged, as Dr. Heylin informs us; and it will be declared in the 29th article, that the body of Christ being now in heaven, cannot be also in the sacrament.

Under queen Elizabeth this article is put out again, and the old belief re-adopted.

After some time, numbers of reforming quacks start up and reform the reformed church of England, having got a better understanding of scripture than the first reformers. The church of England ministers are by them declared to be ministers of Satan, a swinish rabble, &c. &c. &c. and they set up a new reformation. The farce is not ended yet. George Fox, the cobbler, declares they are all fools, and shaking his head, he groans out the operations of the spirit, that spiritualize the whole of the scriptures. From England transport yourself over to America, and here you will see the church of England reformed

over again, accommodated to the genius of a free

and independent people, dividing and subdividing into numberless branches, and degenerating into deism and even atheism. The xxxix articles, which in England are divine truths are falsehoods in America.

Christ who is present in the holy sacrament in England, has nothing to do with the sacrament in America.

The power of absolution given to the reformation of England is denied to the reformation of America—what is divine truth in England is heresy in America—and the interpretation of scripture which is correct in England is false in America.

The reformation, then, (pretended to be the work of God wrought by inspired men,) is not the same thing in every place and in every age, as it ought to be to prove itself the work of God.

The reformation of Germany is not the reformation of England, that of England not the same as that of America.

The reformation of Luther is not the reformation of Calvin.

The reformation of Zuinglius not that of Wesley, and the reformation of Wesley not that of Fox.

The reformation of 1517 is not the reformation of 1800, and nobody living at present is able to foretell what the reformation of 1900 will be.

If it be permitted to form a conjecture, I think that your Protestant minister is going to introduce a new reformation, for he has discovered (page 69) that kissing a crucifix is an act of idolatry. Now I recollect seeing numbers of Protestants kissing the calfskin cover of the bible. Ask your minister whether kissing leather is not as much idolatry as kissing wood or brass? If so, then it becomes necessary to reform that practice.

The truth is, my dear friend, by misinterpretation and rash judgments, many of the most innocent and even edifying practices of religion may be construed into acts of idolatry; and no wonder if those who from hatred against the Catholic church, squeeze and screw the scripture into senses the most congenial to their feelings and prejudices, should also, from the same disposition, put most hateful constructions on the most innocent Catholic practices.

Thus your minister, who is determined that Catholics shall be idolaters, wilfully shuts his eyes against the doctrine of the Catholic church, which in her profession of faith, in all her catechisms, in all her general councils, founded on the word of God, plainly declares her belief in one only God, the only fountain of all blessings, and plainly condemns any confidence in the power of the blessed saints, and angels, only that,

which as mere creatures, they have obtained from the great creator, "to rule over nations." (Rev. ii. 26, 27,) "To minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation." (Heb. i. 14. Acts, v. 19. and xxvii. 23.) To pray or intercede for us sinners. (Zach. i. 12. Rev. v. 8. &c. &c.)

Your minister, I say, determined that we shall be idolaters, shuts his eyes against the very words of scripture, which he PRETENDS to revere, and thus perverts our praying to the saints into an unscriptural act of idolatry.

The scripture says, "judge not," &c. (Matt. vii. 1.) but your minister says, "I will judge the Papist; and in their confessing to God and to the whole court of heaven, and in their prayers to the saints, I am determined to find them guilty of idolatry."

The scripture gives us several instances of miracles wrought by the Almighty by means of the bones, of the clothes, and even of the shadow of saints, (4th Book of Kings, xiii. 21. Acts, v. 15, and xix. 12,) but your minister is determined that we shall be guilty of idolatry whenever we shew any respect for the relics of saints, or any confidence that the Almighty, who makes use of the most weak and despicable means and things to bring about great ends, will still make use of those relics as instruments to convey certain

blessings, of which there are thousands of instances in the Catholic church. It was a miracle of that kind which accelerated the conversion of Mr. Thayer, a Presbyterian minister of Boston, who had been as loud and clamorous against praying to the saints and venerating their relics as your minister. (See the history of Mr. Thayer's conversion written by himself.)

When we pray to the saints for certain blessings, or to be delivered from certain evils, your minister (by an evil interpretation of our words) finds us guilty of idolatry, although we protest that we do not expect any thing from them in our behalf but their intercession, and the exercise of that subordinate power, which as creatures but as glorified creatures, and as friends of God, they have received from the great Creator. "He that shall overcome," &c. (says the Almighty,) "to him I will give power over the nations." (Rev. ii. 26.)

It is no wonder, indeed, that your minister, who is willing to screw and squeeze the sacred text of scripture into what sense he pleases, should be willing to misinterpret our prayers, and even our intentions, to make them appear idolatrous.

The Protestant minister has filled a great number of pages with irrelevant matter, as so many auxiliaries in his ecclesiastical campaign against

the Catholic church. As my time is very limited I shall embrace the opportunity which the present letter affords me, in order, by a few additional lines, to supercede the necessity of a confutation in form.

The Protestant minister has ransacked some old libraries, and shaken off the dust of many an old book, that lay forgotten and neglected, in order to furnish himself with arms against Popery, and behold the happy discovery he has made!

He has found some authors that say "God gave the Virgin Mary the half of his kingdom; that the prayers made to her are better than those made to Christ; that the mother's milk is equally to be esteemed with the son's blood," &c. &c. (page 55 of the Vindication.)

My friend, you certainly will not be deceived by such tricks. If all the nonsense, all the blasphemies, all the impieties, written by individual Catholics, laymen or clergymen, together with all the nonsense and absurdities falsely attributed to them by their enemies, and published under forged Catholic names, were put up in one heap, an acre of ground would not be sufficient to contain them. But remember that I have only undertaken to defend the doctrine of the Catholic church, not the absurdities and blasphemies of individuals. Your minister says (after quoting the above absurdities,) "this is a part of the ser-

vice, the church of Rome puts up to the Virgin Mary," &c. (page 55.) Tell your minister to remember the commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," &c. and to remember also the priest's spittle in the holy water!!! I pray that none of his slanderous assertions may rise against him on the awful day of God's eternal vengeance.

What he calls (in the same page 55,) abundance not only of superstition but also of idolatry, viz: our confiding in the merits and prayers of the saints, is also founded on his misconception or misrepresentation. Listen to his reasons: "It is the will of God," (says he,) "and the express command of scripture, that we should regard Jesus Christ as the only cause of our salvation."

The Catholic church never acknowledged any other but her divine Spouse Jesus Christ, as the fountain of salvation. But ask your minister, my friend, whether he believes the declaration made by God himself, "that he would spare a whole city for the sake of ten just men." (Gen. xviii. 32.)

"That he will accept the face of Job (his prayers and intercession) in behalf of his three friends." (Job, xlii. 8.)

"That he will forgive the people of Israel for the sake of Moses." (Numb. xiv. 20.)

It is truly ludicrous to see with what degree of pertinacity your minister is determined to carry his point, and to prove us idolaters.

He is not aware of the consequences of his assertions. Jesus Christ says he is the only cause of salvation, and therefore Catholics are idolaters for applying to the friends of Jesus Christ for help, for that help which they can only grant in virtue of the power of Jesus Christ. Retorting his own argument, I shall now prove that all Protestants, with their clergy, are idolaters; for it is evident that Jesus Christ alone is the fountain of all knowledge, of all wisdom. Now it is also evident that Protestants, instead of applying immediately to that fountain, address themselves to their ministers, (who are but weak mortals) for instruction. It is also evident that the ministers themselves are idolaters, for although they know Jesus Christ alone to be the sole author of all spiritual power, yet instead of going straight away to him for knowledge in divinity and for ordination, they go to a college conducted by mere men in order to obtain both learning and ordination.

I expect, my friend, you will acknowledge my argument to be as good as that of your minister. If applying for help of any kind to subordinate beings in heaven be an injury to Christ and an act of idolatry, it is a greater injury to Christ

and a more gross act of idolatry, to apply for help of any kind to subordinate beings on earth, and as Christ God is the fountain of all blessings, the king, and only rightful owner and ruler of the whole universe, every body is guilty of idolatry who in any case whatever applies to man for any favor instead of applying to Christ.

Such are the absurd consequences of your minister's doctrine ; what then is the conclusion ? If it be no sin, no idolatry, to apply to weak mortals for many favors or blessings, for bread, for money, for instruction, for offices, for prayers, &c. provided we acknowledge God alone to be the author of all those blessings ; neither is it idolatry to ask blessings, favors, prayers, &c. of the blessed saints, provided we acknowledge God alone to be the fountain of those blessings, which by God's own appointment are often distributed through the ministry, and at the intercession of those blessed spirits, as I have proved from Rev. ii. 26, 27. Acts, v. 19. and xxvii. 23. Heb. i. 14. Zach. i. 12. &c. &c.

Your minister peremptorily decides, (page 54,) 'it is certain the saints cannot hear us.'

Ask him, my friend, at what time he was by the Almighty admitted, like St. Paul, into the third heavens ? Unless he was, I do not understand how he is able to make that bold decision, especially when he has to make it in contradic-

tion to scripture, which declares the angels capable of knowing our very thoughts, as I prove in my "Defence," (page 97,) from Luke, xv. 10, &c. &c.

I shall say nothing here about his charge concerning our using charms and conjurations in blessing water, salt, oil, &c. which in plain English means that we invoke the devil in blessing those things. The minister has read the Roman mass-book, ritual, pontifical, &c. as plainly appears from page 140 of his "Vindication," and therefore he knows himself guilty of bearing false witness.

A few words more on the following subjects ("Vindication," page 8,) and I shall close the present letter, which I am afraid begins to tire you :

- " 1. Celibacy of the clergy.
- " 2. The holy office of the inquisition.
- " 3. Works of supererogation.
- " 4. Persecution of Protestants ; that is, burning the body for the good of the soul.
- " 5. Miracles wrought by the priests and monks of the church of Rome.
- " 6. Mass celebrated in an unknown tongue."

1. THE CELIBACY OR SINGLE LIFE OF THE CLERGY

Is founded on the declaration of St. Paul, (1. Cor. vii. 34, 35, and 38, 40,) by which it is plain that virginity is by the spirit of God preferred to marriage, and the reason given “that you may attend upon the Lord, without distraction.” No man is compelled by the church to remain single; but the church declares herself unwilling to admit to ordination any but those who after mature deliberation and many years’ trial are willing to promise continency, that being undivided (1 Cor. vii. 34,) they may the better attend to the things of the Lord.

Against this holy doctrine of St. Paul’s, embraced by the Catholic church, if one should object the dangers arising from the corruptions of human nature, my answer is, that the grace of God, which by proper means can be obtained, is sufficient to overcome that corruption, and that without the grace of God, marriage itself offers no sufficient security, as woful experience proves.

How great an obstacle the incumbrance of a family must be to zealous clergymen, in the discharge of their duties under many particular circumstances, must be obvious, (says bishop Milner, letter iii. page 60, Baltimore edition,) such as in times of persecution, when religion is to be

propagated amongst infidel and barbarous nations, and when persons dying of infectious diseases require the consolation and help of religion to support them.

Some years ago, when that dreadful contagion raged amongst the prisoners of war confined in the king's house, London, which carried off so many hundreds, numbers of them, who were French Protestants, called upon Protestant ministers for that attendance which they saw administered to the Catholic prisoners by one or two priests. They called in vain; which caused those Protestant prisoners to apply to the priests and to die Catholics. What was the excuse of the Protestant ministers for not attending? It was what might be expected: "We are not more afraid," said they, "as individuals, to face death in the discharge of our professional duties, than the priests are, but we must not carry a poisonous contagion into the bosom of our families."

Another advantage which a continent clergy has over a married clergy, is in the case of missions for the conversion of infidels.

An expedition of missionaries was sent from London, at an immense expense, for the conversion of the people of Otaheite and the neighboring islands. The married missionaries took their wives with them. The consequence was, that jealousies and quarrels concerning the women

soon took place between the savages and their preachers, the latter being obliged to take up arms, and to learn the manual exercise, in order to restrain the lustful passion of the former, which they were unable to quell by the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT. (See their Letter, dated March 6, 1798, published in the London Courier, Dec. 18, 1799. See also Memoirs of a Missionary Voyage in the ship Duff, pages 81, 85.)

It has been partly owing to this disadvantage in their ministry, that the Protestants have hardly yet succeeded in converting any but very few infidels to Christianity, whilst the Catholics have made converts by thousands and millions among the infidel nations of the globe.

2. THE HOLY OFFICE OF THE INQUISITION.

If it had been established (as your minister would fain wish to make you believe,) in order by tortures, &c. to force the consciences of men, I should no more attempt to advocate it than your minister will attempt to advocate the proceedings of the court of high commission against the Catholics under queen Elizabeth; both then would be monuments of barbarism and of the infernal spirit of religious fanaticism and bigotry. Of this I shall say more in some future publication; remember meanwhile, that the said institution, and the nature of its proceedings, have

been very much misrepresented by Protestant writers.

3. WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION.

Praying, fasting, almsdeeds, and other good works recommended in many texts of holy writ, and by Almighty God recompensed with great blessings.

Moses fasted forty days without eating or drinking. (Exod. xxxiv. 28.)

“Achab put haircloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and slept in sack cloth,” &c. and the Lord said “because Achab has humbled himself for my sake, I will not bring the evil in his days.” (3d. Kings, xxi. 27—29.)

“The angel Raphael said to Tobias: prayer is good with fasting and alms. * * * * Alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting.” (Tob. xii. 8, 9.)

By fasting and prayer the people of Bethulia obtained the grace of God to be delivered from Holofernes. (Judith.)

By fasting and prayer, the Ninevites, doomed to destruction, appeased the anger of God, and obtained their pardon. (Jonas, iii. 5—10.)

Christ himself fasted forty days before entering on his ministry, &c. &c. &c.

Besides many things commanded by holy writ.

there are many other things counselled, and great rewards promised, to those who follow those counsels, for instance: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell the things that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow me." (Mat. xix. 21.)

Again, St. Paul advises to a single life and perfect continency, as himself followed, (1 Cor. vii)

When a Christian, with the view of pleasing God, of punishing himself for his sins, of obtaining mercy from the Lord, of being admitted to a greater degree of glory hereafter, performs those things, which are not absolutely commanded but counselled, he is said to do works of supererogation.

4. PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANTS, THAT IS, BURNING THE BODY FOR THE GOOD OF THE SOUL.

I am much at a loss to know why your minister has introduced this article, which he well knows is no article of the Catholic creed. Does not this look like wishing to kindle up a flame? (See preface to Dr. Johnson's "Vindication.") Would he think it fair if I was to attack his religion, by bringing forward the bloody statutes of England against Catholics, the confiscations of property that reduced millions to poverty, the hangings, burnings, embowellings, &c. &c. &c.

inflicted on Catholic priests and schoolmasters for saying mass or teaching.

The Catholic church so much abhors persecutions for the sake of religion, that the clergymen of that church have upon all occasions exerted their zeal to prevent it and to oppose it.

Read the letters of the celebrated bishop Bartholomew de las Casas, and you will see with how much zeal he opposed, during fifty years, the detestable cruelties exercised by the Spaniards against the Indians, which gave the latter an insurmountable hatred against the Christian religion.

When the celebrated Fenelon, archbishop of Cambray, was appointed to bring back to the church so many Calvinists of France, and was informed that Louis XIV. had determined to back his mission with a military force, Fenelon absolutely opposed the measure, obtained its repeal, and having undertaken their conversion, by his zeal tempered with mildness and charity, brought many of those strayed sheep back to the pale of the church.

So did also the celebrated Francis de Sales bishop of Geneva, whose mission among the Calvinists of his diocese was to be protected by an armed force sent by the French king. Armed only with the cross, and with confidence in the protection of God, he succeeded in converting about seventy thousand of them

At the time of the execrable massacre of the French Calvinists, under Charles IX. thousands of those poor devoted victims found shelter in the houses of Catholic bishops and priests, upon which many of them embraced the Catholic faith.

I am happy to have it in my power to state, that an illustrious example of that kind, is found in the late generous reception and protection granted by the Protestant clergy of England to thousands of the persecuted Catholic clergymen of France.

Times are altered. my friend. The faggot (as O'Leary says) which formerly roasted the man at the stake, is now confined to the kitchen, and destined to feed him.

Catholic or Protestant potentates who abused their power, in order to force the consciences of men, and by tortures to oblige them to embrace their own creed, were monsters and not Christians; and the Catholic church so much abhors the shedding of blood, or any acts of cruelty, that by a law of said church, all those are excluded from ordination, and are declared irregular, who either directly or indirectly have any hand in the effusion of blood, even although no crime is thereby committed; thus, any person co-operating towards bringing a malefactor to capital punishment, as accuser, lawyer, witness.

notary to write the sentence, or as judge, becomes irregular, and inadmissible to holy orders.

5. MIRACLES WROUGHT BY THE PRIESTS AND MONKS OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

This article, of which your minister demands an explanation, is no article of our creed. But to gratify his curiosity, I shall only observe, that miracles are some of those extraordinary means which God uses when he pleases, for the promotion of his glory and the salvation of souls, and in the performing of which he may use not only priests and monks but also lay people as his instruments. The apostles of Christ had the gift of miracles, by which they proved their mission and convinced nations of the necessity of embracing the law of Christ.

St. Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, St. Augustine, who converted England, many other clergymen who converted pagan nations of Europe, in later times St. Francis Xaverius, the apostle of the East Indies, and others in different parts of the new world, had the gift of miracles, which established the divinity of their mission, and converted millions. God is master of his gifts, he communicates them to whom he pleases, and his arm is not shortened, his power not curtailed; but there are persons who contrary to the advice of Christ to Thomas, (John xx. 29,) will not believe unless they have seen.

6. MASS CELEBRATED IN AN UNKNOWN
TONGUE.

Viz. In the Latin tongue. This custom is founded upon very good reasons :

1st. The Latin is a dead language, not subject to changes, therefore better adapted than a living language to prevent changes creeping into the liturgy of the church.

2nd. The use of the Latin establishes a uniformity in the service throughout the whole world.

3d. There are priests of all nations. Mass, which is the principal part of the Catholic worship, being every where celebrated in Latin, a priest from any country whatever, may go to any country under the globe, and the very day he arrives he is fit to step before the altar and celebrate mass.

4th. The mass contains awful and tremendous mysteries, therefore, although celebrated in public, the sacred words therein used and pronounced, ought not to be exposed to profanation, therefore they are pronounced in a language only known to the more improved classes of society. An instance of such profanation your minister has recorded in his "Vindication," with his own hand, (page 43) where he has attempted to intimate that *hocus pocus* is derived from the sacred words of Christ *hoc est Corpus meum*, this is my

body. He meant to throw a slur on Catholic priests, but as the words originate with Christ himself, and not with the priest, it is upon Christ that the aspersion falls. Any blasphemy, any sacrilegious scurrility will pass with certain persons, if it only militates against the Catholic church.

Catholics assisting at mass suffer no detriment by not understanding the Latin language, as they have the mass prayers in the vernacular language in almost all their prayer books.

Your minister thinks (see "Vindication," page 140,) that greater service could not be done the reformation, than by translating into English the missal or mass-book, breviary, &c. You may tell him that this has been done long since in the city of London, where Catholics are nevertheless increasing from year to year.

What your minister states of the wickedness of Popes, is nothing to the purpose. It no more disproves the divinity and holiness of the Catholic church, than the prevarication of Judas or the fall of St. Peter. Nor does it disprove the validity of the Pope's supremacy. (See "Defence of Catholic Principles," p. 116—130.) Ask him whether bad conduct, extravagant claims, or usurpation of power by a president, would prove the constitution of the United States to be bad? His account of the corruption of Popes is much ex-

aggerated, and no wonder, when he draws his information on that subject from such sources as David Hume, Buck, father Paul, &c. the two former of whom were as eminent for their inaccuracies and misrepresentations, as the latter was for his hypocrisy and treachery, as is proved by the Protestant bishop Burnet, and others. However, let this pass with all the other misrepresentations contained in your minister's Vindication. It unfortunately requires more time to confute calumnies than to advance them. It would take volumes to confute very minutely every falsehood advanced to the few pages of said publication, which would require more time than I have to spare, nor in fact is it necessary, as much of that matter is altogether irrelevant, I mean to confine myself to what is really important, as belonging to the substance of religion. I shall therefore, for this time, only notice one more passage in your minister's "Vindication," which indeed is too curious to be omitted.

After spending 133 pages, in order, by scurrility, abuses, misrepresentations, &c. to prove the Catholic church to be the w——e of Babylon, the Pope Antichrist, the priests magicians, sorcerers, bloodhounds, the lay people silly, ignorant, stupid, &c. &c., in short, the whole church a sink of corruption, superstition, and idolatry, he tells us very gravely, (page 134,) "It has

Seen, and yet is, the opinion of the Protestants, that an ignorant and unlearned people, who have been brought up and educated in such or such religious principles, **THOUGH NEVER SO ABSURD, SHOULD ADHERE TO THEM**, as the prejudice of education will go a great length," &c.

Accordingly, if some of our Roman Catholics, after reading your minister's "Vindication," should begin to open their eyes, and finding that they have been imposed upon and led astray by their priests, should apply to your Protestant minister for instruction, here is what he would tell them :

"My dear Popish brethren :

"When meditating seriously, in the silence of retirement, on the sublime truths of revelation, I am struck with awe and terror at the dreadful remembrance of the judgments denounced against idolaters. My heart melts within me, and my eyes flow with tears of compassion and sorrow, seeing so many millions of you embracing the wh—e of Babylon and riding the seven headed beast, which is bringing you along the broad road to eternal flames. Ah, my friends! my brethren! why do you suffer yourselves to be imposed upon by your priests? Why are you so simple as to believe what they tell you about the promises of Christ, that the Spirit of Truth should never leave his ministers, **that himself will**

be with them to the consummation of the world, &c.? Cannot you see with your own eyes, that Christ has broken his promises long since, and that the church, the grand work of Christ, was going to destruction fast, had not we (the reformers) risen in our might, to mend it, and restore it again? Ah, my brethren! as a pastor of souls, as a minister of Christ, I feel myself consumed with the fire of divine love, and with zeal for the salvation of your souls. Forsake then, my friends, forsake the road of idolatry, the road of damnation. Search the scriptures. Interpret for yourselves. The scriptures alone are infallible. If you should be at a loss about the sense of scripture, or if you should be staggered by our contradictory interpretations, never mind that; at all events fly my brethren, fly from the wh—e of Babylon. Behold the ark of salvation, the holy reformation, the concord of discordant doctrines, the most perfect unity made up of all manner of contradictions! But no, my friends: Stop, I was mistaken; stop, be comforted! You are ignorant and unlearned, therefore continue as you have begun. You began the career of idolatry; continue to the end. You have been riding the seven headed beast, do not forsake that beast; and may the broad road to hell and damnation bring you to the kingdom of heaven. Amen."

How do you like the above advice. I shall

now give you the advice of a Catholic clergyman to his Protestant brethren, and then leave it to your judgment to determine which of the two advices is the most rational and the most safe, and which of the two you will adopt.

“ My dear Protestant brethren :

“ Do not be deceived; there is only **ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, AND ONE BAPTISM.** (Eph. iv.) Only **ONE** church, raised by the hands of Jesus Christ, against which all the powers of hell shall never prevail. (Mat. xvi. 18.) Only **ONE** church in which the Spirit of Truth abides for ever. (John, xiv. 16.) Only **ONE** ark of salvation, of which Jesus Christ is the pilot, until the consummation of the world. (Mat. xxviii. 20.) Whoever is not in that one only vessel shall suffer shipwreck; whoever will not hear that church will meet the fate of heathens and publicans. (Mat. xviii. 17.)

“ Search the scriptures, my friends; they loudly proclaim the divinity of Jesus Christ, and of course bear testimony to the truth of his words.

“ Search the scriptures; they clearly point out to you the church as your only guide in the ways of salvation. It is to her, and not to their own dead letters, they send you for instruction.

“ Search the scriptures; but do not erect yourselves judges of their contents. Search them in the spirit of humility, and you will discover **an**

abyss of divine wisdom, that will baffle all the efforts of human reason; a splendor of light, which your weak eyes will not be able to bear; a food too rich, too strong for your weak stomach. Be not dismayed. Like a little child, apply to your mother the holy church of Christ, and you will find that strong food by her digested, and adapted to the weakness of your stomach.

“Do not be imposed upon by the assertion of your ministers. All their learning, (and some of them are men of great learning,) all their ingenuity, (and some of them are very ingenious,) all their bible quotations, (and some of them have almost the whole bible by heart,) will never be able to invalidate the promises of Christ.

“Remember that the combined wisdom, learning, and ingenuity of ALL Protestant bishops, will never be able to hurl the Catholic church from the rock on which it was raised, to deprive the said church of the Spirit of Truth, which is to guide it for ever, or to tear Jesus Christ from the helm of that vessel of salvation, which he has promised to conduct until the consummation of the world.

“Do not be imposed upon by great names. The true greatness of man depends on the depth of his humility, and the perfection of his obedience. Learning and talents are useful when applied to their proper objects; to those I mean

that are within the grasp of the human understanding. When applied to objects which are of their own nature impervious or impenetrable to human reason, they are very dangerous; they turn wisdom into folly, and make of the greatest divines mere quacks and empirics.

“When you are told, then, that the celebrated bishop Tillotson, the most learned bishop White, the great philosopher Averoes, have, by their powers of reasoning, by the ingenuity of their sarcastic remarks, or by their thundering vociferations, &c. overturned transubstantiation, confession of sins, &c. &c. admire the height of human folly, in attempting to measure immeasurable abysses, and to compass with the senses or with a limited reason, what is transcendently above the nature of human things.

“Do not be imposed upon by a pretended respect for the bible. By the magic powers of the words *IT MEANS*, the reformed ministers make the bible say what they please. With all the dignity of power, with all the self-importance of a ridiculous pride, with the most impudent assurance, they determine the sense of the Holy Ghost; and they always take care to make their interpretations militate against the Catholic doctrine. They are very fond of quoting from the most difficult and obscure parts of scripture, such as the book of Revelation and the epistles of St.

Paul which being mysterious, and hard to be understood. (2 Peter, iii.) afford a great chance to self-conceited and prejudiced interpreters.

“Do not be deceived by your minister’s long tales, (some true and some false,) about the wickedness of some Popes and other Catholic clergymen. Christ did not promise impeccability or exemption from sin, to any clergymen. He promised the Spirit of Truth to teach all truth to the body of the pastors, and when he enjoins obedience to their commands, he in the same breath cautions us against their bad examples. (Mat. xxiii. 2, 3.) He foretels, that until the harvest day, good and bad shall be mixed in his church; and he suffered two of his apostles to fall into very great crimes. Your ministers are very fond of blending together those two distinct subjects impeccability and infallibility, in order to create a confusion, and to impose on the ignorant and the simple, many of whom honestly believe, that by infallibility we mean exemption from sin, whereas we mean nothing but what your own scripture plainly teaches you, that from the foundation of the church until its consummation, the divine Spirit of Truth shall be always with the apostles and their successors in the ministry, (John xiv. 16,) to enable them to teach all truth and no falsehood, (Mat. xxviii. 20,) to enable them to know the true meaning of the different

scripture texts, to discern the true from so many false translations, to know the canonical or divine books, and also to distinguish divine from human traditions; in short, to preserve the whole deposit of faith in its original purity. To know all these things, my brethren, is so essentially necessary for salvation, and to know them is so completely impossible, without a divine infallible or unerring authority, that, to deny this infallible authority, so clearly and pointedly established by Christ, is to subvert the religion of Jesus Christ, and to establish in its place the fluctuating opinions of men.

“Pray then, my friends, pray sincerely, that your eyes may be opened; pray for humility to submit your understanding in all matters of religion to the dictates of the ancient church of Jesus Christ, which alone is guided by the Spirit of Truth for ever, which alone is Catholic or universal, spread among all nations and embracing about three-fourths of Christendom, which alone is perfectly one in all matters of faith and salvation, which alone is the immaculate spouse of Christ, without spot or wrinkle. (Eph. v.) I again pledge my salvation, that in it, (provided you will submit to its precepts) you will find salvation, which (as sure as Jesus Christ is God) cannot be obtained in any of those churches

that have separated from that only spouse of Christ."

My dear friend, if the above advice appears to you rational, and conformable to what you already know of the word of God, you will take it. After meditating seriously on the subject, you will let me know your sentiments; and you may expect to hear more on the subject, from

Your humble servant,

And friend,

DEMETRIUS A. GALLITZIN.

MARCH 29, 1819.

POSTSCRIPT.

Before sending off this letter, I think it necessary to add a few lines, in order to explain the words which your minister quotes from page 143 of my "Defence," and which he calls a strong imprecation. The words which I there made use of, and which I shall be willing to repeat in my dying hour, if by the mercy of God, I die in my senses and in the state of God's grace, are as follows :

"May the day of judgment be for me the day of God's *eternal vengeance*, if the holy Roman Catholic church is not the only one, true, and immaculate spouse of Christ. May my soul be doomed to suffer for you eternally all those torments which you would deserve, by following all the pretended superstitions of the church of Rome !"

"I have never met with a stronger imprecation," says the Protestant minister, "one excepted, which was, when the Jews crucified the Saviour of the world, &c. they cried out, His blood be on us, and on our children, &c." (Vindication, page 126.)

My dear friend, you may tell your minister that all the Catholic clergy, together with all the well informed lay members of our church, will

with the greatest pleasure, join with me in this pretended imprecation.

Words to the same amount, in the mouth of a Protestant, would be extremely rash and presumptuous, because, the Protestant having no guide but his blind reason in the interpretation of the divine word, can never acquire a certainty sufficient to justify the above expressions. The utmost influence that any Protestant creed can possibly have over a Protestant mind is, a mere hope or presumption, that it may be true; which from the acknowledged fallibility of that guide, (blind, puny reason,) must leave a fear on the Protestant mind, that he is perhaps mistaken, nay, a certainty that thousands are actually mistaken, as the different Protestant creeds do contradict one another in most essential points, even in the very fundamentals of Christianity.

The case of a Roman Catholic is far different. He believes that Jesus Christ is God, and as a necessary consequence, that every word spoken by Jesus Christ is a divine truth.

He therefore believes that the church of Christ stands on a rock ever since the time it was by the Divine Architect raised on that rock. (Mat. xvi. 18.) He also believes that on the same rock it will stand until the end of time, and that the gates of hell (the powers of darkness) will never prevail over it.

He believes that the spirit of truth has never departed from the ministers of that church, of which Christ is the founder; and that the same Spirit of Truth will continue to teach them all

truth, for ever. (John xiv. 16, 17 and 26, also xvi. 13.)

He believes that Christ himself has been, ever since the foundation of the church, and will be to the consummation of the world, the guide of his ministers, when they teach all nations, and administer to them baptism and the other sacraments. (Mat. xxviii.) These truths, my friend, cannot be disbelieved, only by those that impiously deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, they cannot be misunderstood, as they are expressed in as plain words as ever proceeded from the mouth of Eternal Truth.

Founded on these divine truths, which may be called the axioms of religion, and which are much more certain than the axioms of Euclid, the Catholic can say without any rashness or presumption :

“As sure as God is God, the Catholic church of Christ, founded by Christ on a rock, has these 1800 years been, and will be to the end of time, a teacher of the truth, without the least mixture of error.

“As sure as God is in heaven, the Catholic church never stood in need of being reformed, being always holy, without spot or wrinkle. (Eph. v. 27.)

“As sure as Jesus Christ is God, the protesting against that church, and much more so, the attempt made by sinful man, made by a miserable worm of the earth, to reform the church the most noble of all the works of God, is a most horrible, most detestable act of impiety.

“As sure as Jesus Christ is truth itself, the churches raised in opposition to the Catholic church, called Protestant churches, are no parts of the church of Christ; are churches of Satan, ways to perdition.

“As sure as Jesus Christ is not an impostor, every point of doctrine taught by the Catholic church is divine, and as true as if taught by the mouth of Jesus Christ himself, although the puny reason of a Protestant minister cannot comprehend, nor the pride of the philosopher submit to its doctrine.”

Without any rashness then, without any presumption, the Catholic can offer you his soul and salvation in security for the truth and divinity of his holy religion.

The Protestant is not able to offer you the same security, because he has no certainty. All he can venture to say, when he preaches or expounds the scripture, is, “IT IS MY OPINION,” or, “IF I AM NOT MISTAKEN.” This, my dear friend, proves to you at once, that he is not a minister of Christ, for a minister of Christ is appointed to teach you in the place of Christ, and under the authority of Christ; he that hears him, hears Christ himself, (Luke x. 16.) He does not hesitate: he does not waver; he has no opinions of his own to deliver unto you; but under the guidance of the church, which has the Spirit of Truth for ever, he (without any hesitation, without any doubt or uncertainty on his mind) tells you in the name of Christ, plainly and distinctly, **what you must believe, and what you must do in**

order to obtain salvation ; and he runs no risk in pledging his salvation for the truth of his doctrine—why so? Because he has the veracity of Jesus Christ pledged for the continuance of the Spirit of Truth in the church FOR EVER, for the continual guidance of the church by Jesus Christ, until the consummation of the world. (Mat. xxviii.) In short, for the perpetual infallibility, indefectibility and holiness of the church.

Observe, my friend! no Catholic priest will pledge his salvation that every Catholic will be saved, or that every thing done or said by Catholics, or even by their clergymen, is correct—far from it. We very willingly acknowledge that (whilst our doctrine, as ministers of Christ, dictated by the church, is divine) our own example and our words as men are often, too often, scandalous.

We do not say that the sun of divine truth shall never be obscured by clouds, or by fogs raised by the corruption and wickedness of men, even of clergymen, but we pledge our salvation that the *sun itself* behind these clouds, shall always be bright, and shall never cease emitting the purest rays of light, which shall, even through those clouds, penetrate unto the earth.

We do not say, that the vessel shall never be beaten by tempests, by howling winds and raging waves, so as to appear to the eyes of man to be in danger of sinking, but we pledge our salvation that Jesus Chris' will be and remain at the helm, consequently, that the vessel will ride out the storm, and in safety reach the harbor

We do not say, that the house which Christ raised on the rock will never have its floors or walls overspread with cobwebs, or sullied with the dirt flung against it by its enemies, but we pledge salvation, that the *house itself* will stand firm and unshaken until the consummation of time.

One more passage of the minister's "Vindication" I shall notice, and then I mean to dismiss the subject for this time.

(Page 135.) The Protestant minister affects to express the greatest astonishment that I should really believe the tenets of the Catholic faith; which he calls absurd and contradictory, and that I should even pledge my salvation for the truth of them. "This," says he, "we could not have believed unless we had seen it from under his hand."

How much more astonished will he be to hear that the late archbishop Carroll, one of the most learned men, one of the most amiable characters, one of the most accomplished gentlemen in the United States, lived and died in the firm belief of all those several tenets, of which he made an open profession on his death bed, and that in the presence of a numerous circle of both Catholic and Protestant friends that surrounded his bed on that mournful occasion.

How much more astonished will he be to hear that numbers of well informed gentlemen, even clergymen, both in Europe and in America are continually leaving the reformation and crowding the ranks of Catholicity. Although my informa-

tion on that subject is very limited, yet I know of eight Protestant and Methodist preachers in this country, that have become Roman Catholics, and some of them Roman Catholic priests.

His astonishment must be inexpressible, if he is in the least acquainted with history, and especially with the history of the late times.

So firm was the belief of thousands of the clergy and millions of the lay people of France in those very tenets, which the puny reason of your minister very rashly decides to be absurd and contradictory, that they cheerfully submitted, in defence of these tenets, to the loss of all their property, of all that was dear to them on this side of the grave, and even to the loss of their lives; and met death, inflicted in the most cruel manner which the infuriated Jacobins could devise, with the most intrepid courage. Of one hundred and thirty odd archbishops and bishops (and those were generally men of the most profound learning) only four or five renounced their belief in order to save their lives and property. The number of priests that renounced their religion was also comparatively small. When one word would have saved the whole of them, must it not appear astonishing beyond conception to your minister, that so many thousand of learned men could persevere to their last breath in the belief of those ABSURD and CONTRADICTIONARY tenets, which their temporal interests certainly required them not to believe.

Whilst those pastors renowned for their learn-

ing and piety, and millions of their flocks, were laying down their lives for their faith, and whilst the streams of Catholic blood that fattened the soil of France and reddened its rivers, was a more than convincing testimony that those men really and sincerely believed in these tenets called absurd and contradictory, many of your Protestant ministers (behold here a proof of their great charity) were exulting at the downfall of Popery, and prophesying its utter destruction.

Your minister, whose ingenuity is never at a loss for evasive answers, will probably attribute the sufferings of the French clergy, &c. in the cause of religion to the enthusiasm of the moment. Let him turn his eyes to Great Britain, and especially to Ireland; there he will see what will raise his astonishment to the highest pitch—the sword of persecution hanging, during two hundred years, over four or five millions of Catholics, for believing the very tenets which he calls ABSURD and CONTRADICTIONARY.

Transportation to Botany Bay, hanging, whipping, tortures, &c. &c. inflicted for saying mass, for hearing mass, for teaching the Catholic catechism; nearly the whole population of Ireland deprived of every foot of their real property, ground down by enormous taxes, treated like aliens, nay, like slaves, in their own country: compelled to pay the tenth of all their produce to the Protestant ministers, every moment at the mercy of vile informers and Protestant spies, who are encouraged by the greatest rewards, to

accuse them of complying with the duties of Catholics. See the very laws of nature overturned by a Protestant government, and the son, (by the laws of that country,) authorised to turn his Catholic father into the street, and himself (by becoming a Protestant, and informing against the father) stepping into the whole of his father's property. In short, my friend, behold a system of the most cruel persecution, written in letters of blood, dictated by a Protestant government, (out of pure charity, I suppose, see "Vindication," page 126, lines 5—10; and again, page 115, lines 18—21,) and persevering in its cruel operations, during two hundred years, against four or five millions of Catholics, on account of remaining faithful to those tenets which they had received from their apostle St. Patrick, such as, transubstantiation, confession of sins, purgatory, &c. &c.

To secure themselves from the sword of persecution, and from the bloody statutes enacted against them, they had nothing to do, but go to the next meeting house and renounce the *absurd and contradictory* tenets of the Catholic faith; this they would not do, but preferred all the punishments the law could inflict, and even death, to renouncing any one of these tenets. Your minister will not deny, but among those several generations of Catholics, and in so extensive a population, there must have been (and especially among their prelates and other clergymen) many thousands endowed with at least as great a share

of learning and talents as he himself possesses, and yet it is proved by the above facts, that they sincerely believed in the divinity of the very tenets which your minister, relying on the dictates of his fallible reason, decrees to be absurd and contradictory. If your minister would seriously meditate on the above matters of fact, his astonishment at my stupidity for believing the tenets of the Catholic creed, would cease, or would be turned against himself. He would be, or ought to be, surprised to find himself astonished at the belief of tenets adopted by the sages and the most brilliant geniuses of all ages, such as the Alfreds, the Bedes, the Fenelons, the Bossuets, the Popes, the Drydens, the Stolbergs, &c. &c. who have astonished the world by their profound erudition and the brilliancy of their genius, and some of whom, (being born Protestants.) after the most mature deliberation and many years close study, did embrace the Roman Catholic faith.

In truth, my friend, that a Christian believing Christ Jesus to be God, to be omnipotent, should be willing to believe the most incomprehensible mysteries plainly revealed by Christ, is by no means astonishing.

It is not astonishing, that a Christian, really believing Christ to be the increated wisdom, the fountain of all knowledge, and himself blind and corrupted, should read the sacred book of Revelation with fear and trembling, should acknowledge that he is not able to understand its contents.

It is not astonishing that he should, in that state of perplexity, apply to that very authority (the authority of the church) which Christ himself points out; nor is it astonishing that he should listen to that authority as to the voice of God, when he hears Christ God declare, "he that hears you, hears me," and when he hears the positive promise from the mouth of Christ, that the Spirit of Truth shall be with his ministers *for ever*, and that he himself will be their guide, their pilot, their teacher, until the *consummation of the world*.

It is not astonishing that a believer in the divinity of Christ should expect to find the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the power of forgiving sins, in that place, and with those persons, where Christ declares he left those keys and that power.

It is not astonishing that a believer in the divinity of Christ, should also believe that Christ, who commands us repeatedly to eat and drink his flesh and blood, must have left that flesh and blood, in order to enable us to fulfil his commandment.

It is not astonishing that Catholics, who believe God to be incomprehensible, should, believe the incomprehensible mysteries by him revealed.

On the other hand, it is truly astonishing, that a believer in the bible should disbelieve many parts of its contents.

It is truly astonishing that a believer in the divinity of Christ should be a disbeliever in **all the different and most essential powers granted by Christ to his church.**

It is exceedingly astonishing that a learned man, and a man calling himself a minister of Christ, should read in his testament, "receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven," &c. and after reading these words of his divine Master, should ask the question, "where is that power given to a sinful creature, and one who has to answer for his own sins?" ("Vindication," page 19.)

It is, beyond expression, astonishing that a believer in the sacred records, who tells us repeatedly that he will believe nothing but what is contained in the old and new testaments, at the same time proclaims to the world that he, even in most essential matters, believes the very reverse.

Whereas the sacred record, dictated by the Holy Ghost, tells him that the church is the spouse of Christ, holy, glorious, without spot or wrinkle, and without blemish; (Eph. v. 25—27.) "No, no," says the minister, "it is not so; for the church proved an adulteress, a wh—e, a sink of corruption, idolatry, and superstition."

Whereas the sacred record plainly exhibits Christ as promising to his ministers the Spirit of Truth, not for three or four hundred years only, but *for ever*; (John xiv. 16, 17.) "No, no," says the minister, "not for ever; for after a few hundred years the church became the teacher of errors and not of truth."

In short, whereas every word in the sacred record proceeds from the infinite abyss of Eter-

nal wisdom, and cannot be fully understood and explained, except by the Holy Spirit of Truth. "No, no," says the minister, (substituting his own puny reason to that guide which Christ left his church for ever) "no, no; I can explain all myself." And then assuming an authority which I never knew an earthly judge to assume in explaining the laws of man, he goes on to decree what Jesus Christ evidently MEANT; he goes on to discard the most essential powers that Christ left his church; he goes on to level down all the difficulties and mysteries of revelation to the level of his contracted understanding. This is truly astonishing, and more astonishing than transubstantiation and all the other mysteries of the Catholic church; for it certainly is not surprising that out of the abyss of Infinite Power and Infinite Wisdom, incomprehensible mysteries should proceed.

It is not surprising that the very authority should be found in the church which Jesus Christ left with the church, when he declares, "As the father has sent me, I also send you.—* * * * * Receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c. (John xx. 21, 22, 23.)

With power and authority the Father sent Jesus Christ; with power and authority then Jesus Christ sent his ministers.

According to your Protestant minister, there is not an atom of power left in the church, and the ministers themselves are the most useless beings on earth.

They have not the power of forgiving your sins.

They have not the power, by consecration, to procure for you the flesh and blood of Christ, which Christ declares (John vi.) to be the spiritual food of your souls.

They have not the power to bless water, salt, or any of God's creatures. Your minister laughs at the very idea. ("Vindication," page 125.)

They have not the power of banishing evil spirits.

They have not the power of explaining to you the true sense of scripture. By the minister's acknowledgment, their church or churches are fallible subject to errors and mistakes.

You know then, my friend, from your minister's "Vindication," what powers he *has not*. It would be worth your while to go to him and to ask him what power he *has*? I cannot imagine what his answer would be; for after having discarded all the different powers essentially necessary to enable the ministry of Christ to be of service to their flock, I do not see any power left for him to claim, but a power that any lay person may claim as well, viz. the power of saying some prayers and the power of reading a text of scripture, and putting on it some sort of construction, either true or false, which even Satan is able to do. (Mat. iv. 6.)

I am acquainted with a very respectable man, formerly a Protestant, whom this acknowledged want of power in his minister, caused to forsake

the pretended reformation, and with his whole family, to embrace the Catholic faith. For a considerable length of time he was persecuted, and his property destroyed by the agency of evil spirits; the clothes belonging to him and his family were seen (by invisible hands) a cutting to pieces, stones were seen moving across the room held by invisible hands, fire bursted repeatedly from out of their beds at broad day-light, strange and frightful apparitions and strange noises terrified them very often at night.

The good old man reading in his bible that Christ had given to his ministers power over evil spirits, started from home to Winchester in Virginia, and having, with tears in his eyes, related to his minister (parson S——t) the history of his distress, losses, and sufferings, begged of him to come to his house, and to exercise in his favor the power which he had received from Jesus Christ. The parson candidly confessed that he had no such power. The good old man insisted that he must have that power, for he had found it in his bible. The parson replied, that that power only existed in old times, but was done away now. (See "Vindication," page 125, lines 1—15.) The old man, although living in this "ENLIGHTENED AGE," had not sagacity enough to understand the distinction between *old* times and *new* times, but according to your minister's rule, believed nothing but what he found contained in his bible. He therefore rationally concluded that parson S——t could not be a minis-

ter of Christ; and having left him, he applied to other persons calling themselves ministers of Christ some of whom promised relief. They came, prayed, and read; but they prayed and read in vain. Finally, the old man having (through the means of a respectable Catholic neighbor) obtained the assistance of a real minister of Christ, found the relief for which he had prayed so fervently; and soon afterwards became a most edifying member of the Catholic church.

Your minister would laugh heartily if you should relate to him the above facts; for with wise men of our *enlightened age*, he has peremptorily decided that miracles, &c. are no longer necessary, and of course they have ceased. Since when I did not learn; nor did I ever find any passage in scripture which authorises the belief that miracles should ever cease altogether, or that evil spirits should never have it any more in their power to molest the bodies and property of men, as they used to do during the life time of our Saviour, and even after his resurrection. (Acts v. 16.)

Thousands of the most respectable, the most learned, the most holy of our missionaries, in all the different parts of the globe, met with numberless instances of the kind, especially among the infidels, and had as many opportunities of exercising in their favor the power which Jesus Christ granted his apostles over evil spirits. (Mat

x. i.) which power has descended to their successors.

The same missionaries acknowledge that with many of those poor infidels all their arguments would have been lost, had not an eager desire to free themselves from the molestations of the infernal enemy, almost forced them to fly for help to the cross of Jesus Christ, and to apply to those means (so very despicable and ridiculous in the eyes of your minister, yet) so powerful and efficacious in the hands of the ministry of Jesus Christ, who, in order to confound human pride, human wisdom, makes use of the most weak things of this world that he may confound the strong: (1. Cor. i. 23,) who in order to baffle all the calculations of the wise men of our *enlightened age*, makes use of poor weak sinful men, with no other help but that of weak elements of the sign of the cross, and of a few words, to break down the stratagem of the infernal spirit.

Facts, my dear friend, even the best authenticated facts, are no proofs, for those who are determined to disbelieve them; and the Protestant minister is determined not to believe any facts that would tend, ever so remotely, to establish the authority of the Catholic church.

General principles, in order to be correct, ought to be the result of logical reasoning, the first link in the chain of which ought to be a fact or an axiom, a self-evident truth that needs no proof. To our *enlightened age* it was reserved to frame general principles, not the result of rea-

soning, not deduced from any facts or from any axiom, and to establish them by the boldness of the assertion and by the ridicule thrown on those that would undertake to dispute those principles: in short, by making them fashionable. Thus it is that the general principle has obtained among Protestants "that miracles have ceased, that nothing miraculous or supernatural ought to be believed, &c. and that any one asserting as fact any thing of the kind, is a fool or an impostor."

A fox having lost his tail in a trap, gathered all the foxes in the neighborhood, and having placed himself against a tree, so as to hide his defect, he railed out against their long tails, as a worse than useless incumbrance, and tried to convince them of the advantage they would reap by parting with them, &c.

The above fable accounts for the clamors generally raised by Protestant ministers not only against miracles, but against all the powers which the ministry of Christ very justly claim, in consequence of the grant of their Divine Master, and which the first reformers lost in the trap of Satan, by leaving the only church which Jesus Christ had invested with all spiritual power and authority.

Judge then, my dear friend, from the acknowledgments made by your Protestant minister, whether you can consider him to be a minister of Jesus Christ who declares that he sends his ministers as his heavenly father sent him; wh

plainly specifies the several powers which he grants to his ministers, viz :

The power over evil spirits. (Mat. x. 8.)

The power of reconciliation, or of forgiving sins in baptism and penance. (Mat. xxviii. 18, 19. John xx. 22, 23.)

The power of consecration to procure the spiritual food of our souls, the flesh and blood of Christ. (Luke xxii. 19, 20, and 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.)

The power of preaching the true, genuine doctrine, without any mixture of error. (Mat. xxviii 19, 20. John xiv. 16, 17, and xvi. 13. Eph. iv 11, 12, 13, 14, &c. &c.)

My dear friend, meditate seriously on the above subjects, and let me know the result.

You shall probably hear more on the subject from

Your humble servant,

DEMETRIUS A. GALITZIN.





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Gallitzin, Demetrius A.
(Demetrius Augustine),
A letter to a Protestant
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